BARBER'S

PICTURESQUE ILLUSTRATIONS,

of the

ISLE OF WIGHT

COMPRISING

Views of every object of interest on the

ISLAND,

Engraved from Original Drawings.

Accompanied by

Historical and Topographical Descriptions.

PREFACE.

WHILE the beauties of the British Islands were never so well or so numerously depicted as in the present day, it must be matter of surprise that no Work devoted to "THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND," (as the Isle of Wight is so properly denominated) has ever been published, on the plan of combining Illustrations worthy of the subject, with a concise Historical and Descriptive Guide, and supplying both these *desiderata* at a price sufficiently moderate to meet the circumstances of all who are desirous of visiting this delightful place of resort.

Few places of equal extent possess greater variety and beauty of scenery than this far-famed Island; comprehending, as it does, within the space of a few miles, sublime coast views, terrific chasms formed by convulsions of Nature, richly cultivated plains, and romantic wooded seclusions. As the old rhymist, Michael Drayton (in his *Poly-Olbion*,) picturesquely sings,

> "Of all the southern isles she holds the highest place,
> And evermore hath been the great'st in Britaine's grace;"

Nor is his remark less literally than poetically true, that

> "——the gentle South, with kisses smooth and soft,
> Doth in her bosom breathe, and seems to court her oft;"

a recommendation, which every valetudinarian can so well appreciate.

The WIGHT, too, is not without objects of interest for the historian and antiquary: and it is hoped that while a due attention has been paid to those objects in the following work, they have been also treated with more attention to correct antiquarian principles, than have been applied to them in any previous description, or guide-book.

Of the merit of the Engravings, every purchaser of the volume will form his own estimate. The proprietor will not permit his judgment of them to be influenced by the compliments that have been paid him on their account: yet he thinks it must be allowed by all, that their style transcends that of any previously published views of the Island. In his selection of the places and objects which they illustrate, it has been his chief aim to include those most generally known and visited, and in consequence most interesting to the public at large.

As a Guide to the Traveller and Tourist, it is hoped that the Work will be found in most respects complete. Still it must be apparent, that the limits of the volume would preclude the possibility of mentioning *every thing:* and it may be as well to remark, that the fares of the different conveyances, and such-like information, are in general designedly omitted, for the reason that these matters vary with every successive season, and often more than once during a single season. Correctness in this point being therefore unattainable, it was thought better to be silent, than to incur the probability of misleading the reader.

11, *Park Place, Islington.*

Picturesque Illustrations

OF

THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

CHAPTER I.

BRIEF GENERAL VIEW OF THE ISLAND.

1. *Situation, Extent, Soil, and Climate.*—2. *History.*—3. *Natural and Artificial Divisions.*—4. *Population, and Representation in Parliament.*

1. SITUATION, EXTENT, SOIL, AND CLIMATE.

THE ISLE OF WIGHT is situated in the English Channel, at a short distance from the main-land of Hampshire, of which county it has been commonly reckoned a part. The channel which divides it from the grand line of our southern coast, varies in width from two to six miles, and bears the appellation of the Solent Sea. The form of the island is irregular, but bears a rude resemblance to that of the heraldic lozenge.

In circumference, this far-famed and delightful

"Gem, set in the silver sea,"

may be about seventy-five miles; less, certainly, rather than more. Its extreme length, from east to west, (or from the Foreland to the Needles,) is about twenty-three miles; its greatest breadth, from north to south, (or from the town of

Cowes to St. Catherine's Point,) rather exceeds thirteen miles. Its superficial contents are estimated at 105,000 acres: of which 75,000 may be reckoned as under tillage, 20.000 as devoted to pasture, and the remainder as waste land.

The soil, if treated with reference to the *geology* of the island, would be found to open a field of investigation not a little curious to the scientific inquirer; but such researches are too generally uninteresting to be admitted in this place. The reader, attached to such pursuits, will find all the information he requires in Bèche's "Manual of Geology," and in the Geological Society's Transactions. Here, it will be sufficient to notice, that the Isle of Wight presents both numerous and peculiar advantages for the study of its geological conformation. At, and near the surface, a strong productive loam is commonly prevalent, except in the more northern parts, where a cold stiff clay abounds beyond the wishes of the agriculturist. The crops consist of the various sorts of grain mostly grown on the main-land; to which may be added, potatoes, turnips, beans, peas, mangel-wurzel, &c. Flour is exported to a considerable extent annually; and the meadows produce, upon an average, two tons of hay per acre. The manures are sea-weed, marl, and especially lime; the latter being readily obtained from a chain of calcareous hills which traverse the centre of the island from east to west, and afford pasturage besides for numerous flocks of sheep, which are in repute both for the fineness of their wool, and the lambs which they furnish in great numbers for the London market. Formerly, timber is said to have been so plentiful, that a squirrel might travel for leagues by leaping from the branches: the vicinity of Portsmouth dock-yard will sufficiently account for the fact, that the isle is now comparatively shorn of its forest honours; though a great variety of most beautiful foliage still adorns the scenery, and the stately elm, in particular, luxuriates in the common hedge-rows. The utmost diversity of elevation

pervades the surface; a circumstance that, added to its sylvan richness, and the beauty of the verdure, greatly tends to produce those attractions that all so greatly admire. Besides which, the two sides of the island present each a peculiar character, as distinct, and as strongly opposed, as their aspects. The northern side is marked by all that is rich, lovely, and picturesque: the southern, commonly called the *back of the island,* abounds in bold wild rocks, precipitous projections, ravines, fearful chasms, and other features of the imposing, and even of the sublime. In parts, it is true, these opposite characters are greatly mingled; a circumstance that only adds to the effect produced upon the observer, and, together with the constant alternation of marine and land views, contributes still more powerfully to distinguish the Isle of Wight as the "GARDEN OF ENGLAND."

The climate is well known to be as pure, mild, and salubrious, as the face of the country is beautiful. Its softness and warmth, as compared with that of England in general, are proved by the luxuriant growth, in the open air, of the myrtle, geranium, and other trees and shrubs, which commonly flourish, so exposed, only in more southern latitudes. Evergreens of great size and beauty, over which the winters pass without appearing to affect their foliage or vigour, also constitute a prominent feature of the island. In every point of view, the Isle of Wight may be recommended as a fit place of residence, during the whole year, to invalids. For, the variety which it presents in elevation, aspect, and local circumstances, renders the temperature of the air, and the comparative dryness and humidity, as various: and while no portion of its surface can be considered injurious in these particulars, there is that difference of atmospheric *tone* in different places, which makes one spot as felicitously adapted to the winter, as some other to the summer sojourner. To give the names of such places, at present, would be inconsistent with the plan of our work.

It will suffice to say, (what, indeed, will be generally surmised,) that the northern division of the isle contains the greater number of delightful summer retreats, and the southern division the majority of exceedingly pleasant winter ones.

2. HISTORY.

In historical particulars, we shall be as brief as any degree of justice to the subject will permit. Lengthened details, especially in matters relating rather to the history of South Britain in general, are as foreign to the character of the work in hand, as they would be uncared for by most readers of an illustrative guide to the lovely isle, whose amenities and beauties, as they now exist, we are far more intent upon depicting.

The Isle of Wight is plausibly supposed by the learned, though somewhat too fanciful Whittaker, (author of the "History of Manchester,") to have been the *Insula Vectis* of the Romans; and he conjectures that appellation to have been derived from *Guith*, or *Guict*, the name applied to it by the British aborigines, and signifying the divorced or separated; in allusion, no doubt, to an imagined disruption of the island, at some unknown period, from the main-land of England. The imperial conquerors left no marks, that we can now trace, of their occupation here, if we except a few coins, which were dug up, between sixty and seventy years since, near Carisbrook Castle, a building that, tradition says, marks the site of a Roman fortress.

The Saxons are related to have obtained possession of the island, after a vigorous opposition of the inhabitants, which exposed them to no common calamities, about A.D. 530. Its new masters so frequently quarrelled among themselves, and the dominant Saxon tribe was in consequence so often changed, that the unhappy *Wihtlanders*, as they were now called, enjoyed few intervals of repose from spoil and slaughter; until, at length, their miseries were made complete by the remorse-

less Danes, whose attacks, characterised by conflagration and unpitying bloodshed, extended from the year 787 to the Norman Conquest. The Conqueror gave the island to his kinsman, William Fitz-Osborne, one of his most powerful followers, in return for his having subjugated it, and created him *lord* of the Isle of Wight. The lordship was then held by a succession of Norman barons, during whose supremacy the French became troublesome by their predatory incursions. Many of these were successfully resisted; but still, from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, the wars with France gave occasion to such frequent visits of the enemy, that a constant sense of insecurity possessed the inhabitants; and numerous landholders, in the reign of Edward III., left their estates, until that monarch's threat of confiscation compelled them to return. The most remarkable historic fact, connected with the Norman period, perhaps is, that King John chose the isle for his place of retirement after the signature of Magna Charta, and while brooding over schemes of vengeance for the compliances extorted from him: a line of conduct, that, from its singularity, attracted much observation, and the derision of some, who affected to believe that he had turned merchant, or fisherman, or, as was more obscurely hinted, pirate. The lordship was alienated to the crown, for the inconsiderable sum of 6000 marks, in the reign of Edward I.; and though the validity of the alienation was disputed in Parliament, on the ground of undue influence having been exercised, the point was ultimately decided in the king's favour. Henry VI. created Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, *king* of the Isle of Wight, crowning him with his own hands, in 1445; but the royal title was not afterwards continued. The last *lord* was Richard Widville, earl Rivers, who, incurring the enmity of the tyrannical Richard III., was beheaded by him, without so much as a trial, in 1483. Sir Edward Widville, brother to the late earl, became *captain* of the isle upon the accession of Henry

VII.; and his successors, many of whom were persons of eminence, bore the same title for a considerable period. Henry VIII. made the island the site of several of those castles which he erected along his coasts, for their protection against foreign attacks. At the commencement of the civil wars of the seventeenth century, Jerome, earl of Portland, was *captain*, but was displaced, and the earl of Pembroke appointed *governor* for the parliament in his stead. His successor was colonel Hammond, the parliamentary officer under whose government Charles I. was for some time a prisoner in Carisbrook Castle. From that to the existing period, no event of importance has distinguished the history of the isle from that of England at large: the most remarkable facts in its annals being the succession of its governors, whose appointment by the crown has continued to this day; the present possessor of the office being lord Malmesbury, who succeeded to it in 1811.

The ecclesiastical history of the island presents no subject for remark. It is a part of the see of Winchester.

3. NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL DIVISIONS.

The natural division of the Isle of Wight into north and south, by a nearly centrical chain of hills, or *downs*, has been already alluded to. These downs stretch from Bembridge to the Needles, or entirely across the island. But the division most commonly referred to, is that created by the river Medina, which, rising at the foot of St. Catherine's Down, and falling into the Solent at Cowes, parts the isle into hundreds, of pretty equal size, which are called respectively the East and West Medine. There are two other rivers, each of small size: namely, the Yar, which rises near Freshwater Gate, and falls into the sea at Yarmouth; and the Wootton river, taking name from the village of Wootton, to which, for small vessels, it is navigable. The hundreds are subdivided into thirty parishes, of which the East Medine contains fourteen, and the

West Medine sixteen. Their names are as follow:—East Medine: *Brading*, *St. Helen's*, *Yaverland*, *Shanklin*, *Bonchurch*, *Newchurch*, *St. Lawrence*, *Whitwell*, *Niton*, *Godshill*, *Arreton*, *Binsted*, *Wootton*, and *Whippingham*. West Medine: *Northwood*, *Newport*, *St. Nicholas*, *Carisbrook*, *Gatcombe*, *Kingston*, *Chale*, *Shorwell*, *Brixton*, *Mottiston*, *Calbourne*, *Shalfleet*, *Brook*, *Thorley*, *Yarmouth*, and *Freshwater*.

4. POPULATION, AND REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT.

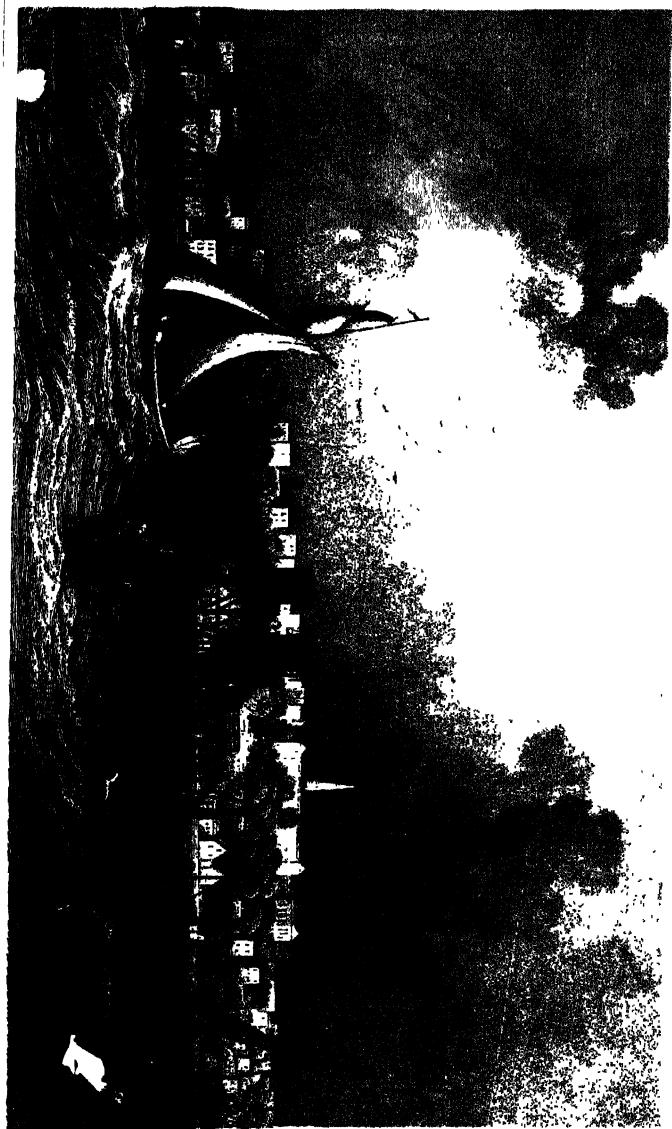
The population of the Isle of Wight, as it appeared in the census of 1831, amounted to 35,363 persons; of whom 17,184 were males, and 18,179 females. The increase, since 1821, was 3752 persons. The number of houses was 5797.

Until the passing of the Reform Act, the isle returned six members to the Imperial Parliament, viz. Newport, two; Yarmouth, two; and Newtown, two. But, for the purposes of that Act, the Isle of Wight is now a county of itself, and returns one member; while, of the towns, Newport only continues to return two. Members returned to the first Reformed Parliament: for the county, Sir Richard M. Simeon, of St. John's, bart.; for Newport, J. Heywood Hawkins, and W. H. Orde, esqs.

CHAPTER II.

RYDE, AND ITS VICINITY.

RYDE is most commonly the point of debarkation for visitors to the Isle of Wight; although Cowes, which is a more considerable town, as well as the port of the island, is also very frequently selected. Supposing Ryde to be adopted in the present instance, we commence our illustrative tour with its description, presuming the steam-boat passage of three quarters of an hour, (at the utmost), from Portsmouth, to have been accomplished. The passage itself is generally a very agreeable little trip, and presents a fine view of the town, rising up the side of a commanding hill, as we approach. The distance across does not exceed six miles. Steam-packets between Ryde and Portsmouth were first established in the spring of 1825, the necessary capital being subscribed in shares of £25 each. Here, as in other places, they have done much towards *systematizing* travelling; conveyance by these vessels being as regular as that by stage-coaches, and the motions of each kind of vehicle being timed by those of the other. Thus, the traveller by the coach from London is assured of no delay on his arrival at Portsmouth; but, on the contrary, that the steam-boat will be found ready to transport him to the island. Persons using their own carriages may even enter them in the metropolis, and first step from them in the town of Ryde; for the packets convey both horses and carriages across by means of tow-boats, and the embarkation and landing of such travelling accompaniments is equally easy.

In particularising the objects that present themselves as we approach, we must first notice the pier, which extends 1740

feet into the sea, and, as is obvious at once, affords a charming marine parade and *observatory*. The villas of the duke of Buckingham and earl Spencer are seen near the shore; while, more elevated, appear the line of very handsome houses called Brigstocke Terrace, with the spire of St. Thomas's chapel, the market-house and town-hall, and the chapel of St. James's. The houses, being generally stuccoed, and of every variety of form and elevation, combine with the foliage of trees and the numerous gardens, to give a picturesque appearance to the scene, which immediately strikes and gratifies every beholder.

From a very inconsiderable village, Ryde has become, within the last sixty or seventy years, a town of importance, boasting its market, and containing a population (according to the census of 1831) of 3396 persons. It possesses no features to interest the antiquarian; but this deficiency is more than compensated, in the eyes of the general visitor, by the neatness, taste, and, in many instances, the beauty of its modern buildings. The streets are wide, and tolerably regular. They are well paved, and cleansed, under the superintendance of commissioners appointed by an Act of Parliament obtained in 1829: but the lighting of the town has not yet been carried into effect, although that improvement is also to be expected, the commissioners being invested with all necessary powers for the purpose. Shops of every description, adapted to the supply of the numerous visitants, as well as to the accommodation of the townspeople at all times, are sufficiently numerous. The retail trade of the place is rather considerable: and the exports, consisting of corn, lambs, sheep, calves, &c. still more important. Many of the East and West India ships, and others, call here to supply themselves with stock for their respective voyages. Boat and yacht building is also established, at a yard from which some vessels of more consequence have been launched.

The grand modern improvement of Ryde is the noble and

beautiful pile of buildings called *Brigstocke Terrace*, the aspect of which is as commanding, and the architecture as elegant, as the view from the houses is extensive and lovely. That view embraces the Solent, the Hampshire coast, the shipping in their infinite variety, &c. There are also numerous detached houses of very handsome exterior: but the leading feature of the town, perhaps, is its cottages, which rise around us in every style, classic, rustic, Gothic, Swiss, and nondescript. The pleasing appearance of these, as well as of the place in general, is much contributed to by the number and beauty of the shrubs and evergreens, especially the latter, which in this island are the ornament of almost every rustic garden. The mansions that adorn the outskirts of the place, are of course the most abundantly supplied with these verdant decorations.

Our view of Ryde from the water, places the ***Pier*** before the eye very prominently. Its length, and facilities for seeing and being seen, have been already noticed. The fashionable promenader, of either sex, will appreciate its excellences in one of these respects without our asistance: let us then simply detail the objects to be viewed *from* this elevated and commanding position. Not to dwell on the surrounding beauties of the Solent Sea, with the vessels of all descriptions moving in every direction, we will first notice the long line of coast, belonging to the main-land, which bounds the prospect to the north. Here, directly in front, appear Stoke's Bay, and the terrace at Anglesea; while, to the left, are seen Southampton Water, with Calshot Castle at its entrance, and the more distant buildings of that town itself. To the right we see Haslar Hospital, with Portsmouth, its dock-yard, the wood of masts which commonly rises from its harbour. and the noble vessels riding at Spithead. The vision then roams to Southsea Castle, and Hayling Island; and, beyond the latter, to the grey outline of Chichester Cathedral; until, yet more to the right, the

view is terminated by Selsey Bill, the British Channel, and the meeting line of the horizon. The eye returning from this point along the island shore, encounters first the woody demesne of Priory; then Sea View; the castle of St. Clare; the woods of Appley and St. John's; the eminence on which Ryde is built, with the general view of the town before spoken of; and, inclining to the right, a mill on the summit, and the seats of the duke of Buckingham and earl Spencer in the foreground. The mansion of George Player, esq.; the Mother Bank, with its vessels at anchor; Binstead; Norris Castle; the ships in the road before Cowes, and the sea and horizon again beyond, complete the circle of our view.

The structure from which this delightful prospect is contemplated, was erected pursuant to Act of Parliament, at an expense exceeding £12,000, which was obtained by creating shares of £50 each. The first stone was laid June 29, 1813, and the building was completed in the following year. It runs due north from the town, and has an entrance arch and lodge, of neat construction, at which two pence are paid by every passenger. After a short distance, the width is contracted, on account of the expense that would have been incurred by completing it according to the original plan: but it is furnished with an iron railing during its entire length, and with seats, secured from the passing shower, for the accommodation of pedestrians. Upon this pier a landing can be effected at all times of the tide, as it extends from the quay to low-water mark, and is furnished in all with eight flights of steps, two of which are at the extremity, and six placed at proper intervals. Persons may subscribe for admittance, if they think proper, at 1*s* 6*d*. per week; families, 6*s*. Or a subscription may be entered into for a week, month, or year.

The chief public buildings of Ryde are the Market-house and Town-hall, St. Thomas's and St. James's Chapels, and the Theatre. We shall notice these in the order they have been here mentioned.

The Market-house and *Town-hall.* This building presents a handsome elevation on the north side of Lind Street. Its frontage, including the long wings which enclose that side of the market, extends 198 feet; the depth is 56 feet. The centre projects so as to form a vestibule, opened by arches at each end, and by four Doric columns in the middle. Over this vestibule rises a pediment, upon the like number of Ionic columns, between which are seen the windows of the large upper apartment used as the town-hall. The wings are appropriate in their style, but have no peculiar architectural decoration. The basement is to be the corn-market; and the area is divided between the dealers in butchers' meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, &c., all of which are excellent in quality, and abundantly supplied. The cattle-market is held in front of the building: market days, Tuesday and Friday.

The upper portion of the edifice, or the town-hall, consists of a handsome room, 44 feet in length, and 26 in breadth; with another apartment, of smaller dimensions, in which are held the meetings of the commissioners appointed by the Act passed in 1829. When both these rooms are thrown into one, which is accomplished by means of sliding doors, a very noble apartment, occasionally used as a ball-room, is the result. The Act just spoken of provided for the erection of this market-house as one of its principal objects. It was completed in June, 1831.

Ryde not being a parish of itself, but forming part of that of Newchurch, whose parochial edifice is seven miles distant, the two sacred structures in the town, belonging to the establishment, must be considered as chapels of ease to the mother church. Of these, *St. Thomas's Chapel* is the principal, as it was the first erected.

The manor of Ryde was part of the possessions of the family of Dillington, till sir John Dillington sold it to Henry Player, esq. whose son Thomas built the first chapel here, in the year 1719, and charged the manor with an annual rent of £10,

payable to the vicar of Newchurch, to officiate therein, or to provide some one to officiate for him. This chapel was of a very humble character, and so small as to become totally inadequate to the accommodation of the inhabitants, and the numerous visitors of the place, several years since. For that reason, George Player, esq., now resident at Ryde House, erected the present handsome structure, upon the site of the former chapel, in the year 1827: under which circumstances, while the endowment continues to take effect, the pew-rents are the property of Mr. Player.

The style of this edifice is the modern Gothic, of which it forms a picturesque, and very favourable specimen. It is built chiefly of the stone obtained from the quarries at Brinstead, near the town, and which forms the common building material of this part of the island, It has coigns of white brick; while the window and door-cases, with some cornices and copings, are of a composition to imitate Portland stone. Over the principal entrance is a shield of the arms of the Player family. This is at the west end, which is ornamented with a handsome tower and spire; the latter elegantly shingled, of light and pleasing form, and sufficiently elevated to answer all the purposes of a land-mark. The interior is simply elegant: the pews, pulpit, and galleries, painted to resemble ancient oak. Three large lancet windows at the east end, containing some stained glass, have a good effect over the altar-piece, which consists of the decalogue, &c. in old English characters upon a gold ground. The galleries are supported by light cast-iron pillars. A small tablet of the king's arms, in high relief, and emblazoned, is set in front of that at the west end: and against the wall, under the same gallery, is a marble tablet, in a painted and gilt frame, with a pediment, containing this inscription:

"Thomas Player Armiger
Domûs Dei, magis quam suæ,
Elegantiæ et nitoris studiosus
Hoc sacellum, tam advenis quam incolis,
Diu multumq. desideratum
Condidit (Anno 1719)
Æmulationis opus non Invidiæ."

Divine service is performed in this chapel, morning and afternoon, every Sunday.

St. James's Chapel, though inferior in size, and less pure in the style of its architecture, (which, as in the case of St. Thomas's, is the Gothic) has a neat and not unpleasing air throughout. The exterior is stuccoed. The principal entrance is in the west front, beneath the clock, which is surmounted by a neat cupola. Immediately over the door is an inscription, in a sunk tablet, simply giving the name and date of the erection. On either side the principal entrance is an octagonal turret, and a wing, battlemented, pierced by a smaller entrance. The interior is simple, and neat; in its general style imitative of an ancient country church of the better order. The pulpit, pews, &c. are painted in wainscot. Over the altar-piece, which contains the decalogue, &c., is a window of stained glass, with the letters I. H. S., and a descending dove, in the central compartment. There is an organ in the gallery at the opposite end.

The edifice thus described was built, in the year 1827, by William Hughes Hughes, esq. M.P. and alderman of London, who has a handsome residence contiguous. It is strictly a proprietary chapel, under the licence of the bishop of the see. The present proprietor and minister, the rev. Mr. Sibthorpe, purchased it of the erector, and made considerable alterations. It stands in Lind Street, close to the market-house. Service is performed here every Sunday morning, and on Sunday and Thursday evenings. The sittings are let at a regulated scale

of prices, of which the lowest is 4*s*. for two Sundays, and the highest 24*s*. for one year.

The other places of worship in Ryde are an *Independent* and a *Wesleyan-Methodist* chapel. The former has a stuccoed front, of some architectural pretensions, together with a neat interior, and an organ. The Methodist chapel, situated in Spencer Road, is built for utility alone, and is perfectly plain in every respect.

The *Theatre* stands commandingly at the top of Union Street, and from its situation derives advantages as to appearance, which its style of erection alone could not have conferred. The front elevation is stuccoed, but has little other decoration than the royal arms, in rude relief, over a cornice, with niches and pedestals for statues over two of the entrances. This building was at first intended for a market-house; but, at that period, a want of funds prevented the completion of the original design. The interior is small, but, under the management of Mr. Barnett, of the Reading circuit, has not been found deficient in attractions for the admirers of the histrionic art. It generally opens in July, and continues its performances until the end of September.

The institutions for education in this town are the *Free-School*, and the *Sunday Schools* attached to the chapels of St. James, the Independents, and the Methodists. These latter appear to be all well conducted, and to reflect equal credit upon the congregations from whom they derive their support. The Free-School, in Melville Street, erected by voluntary subscription in the year 1812, is an institution of some importance, as it educates about 350 children, of whom the proportion of boys to girls is as two to one. The building is without architectural decorations, but well planned, and convenient. The boys' school-room constitutes the centre; the east wing contains that for the instruction of the girls, and is also used for the meetings of the committees: the west wing is the

master's residence. The system of education is Dr. Bell's or the National; though, originally, it was the Lancasterian. Two sermons are preached annually for the benefit of this charity, at St. Thomas's Chapel.

The accommodations for visitors may be arranged under the heads of hotels and inns, boarding and lodging-houses, baths, and conveyances.

Of the first mentioned, *Yelf's Hotel*, in Union Street, and the *Pier Hotel*, are the principal. There are also two commercial houses, with good accommodations, named the *Crown*, and the *Star*; the former in the High Street, the latter in the higher part of the town called Upper Ryde.

Sheridan's Boarding-house, in Union Street, is an excellent establishment of its kind, and extremely well conducted. Though its front is to the most public street in the town, the rear is private and rural, with pleasing grounds attached, and commanding wide and delightful views of marine and coast scenery.

Of *Lodging-houses* there is an ample variety; and the generality of them are possessed of every accommodation, and most pleasantly situated.

The *Baths* are near the Pier, and in Pier Street, and bear respectively the names of Kemp's and Rayner's. They contain all that is usual in such establishments, and are very complete in their arrangements. Ryde surpasses many places of its kind in the facilities it presents for enjoying that luxury to the healthful, and restorative to the sick, sea-bathing. The sands are extensive, and not exposed, as in so many instances to those alternations of favourable and unfavourable states of the ocean, and the tide, which cause so much disappointment at Brighton, Margate, and other places. The reason of this will be readily understood to be, that the billows are here comparatively circumscribed, and lulled, by the narrowness of the strait which separates the island from the opposite shore.

Under the head of *Conveyances* may be mentioned, in the first place, the Steam Packets, which ply daily between this place and Portsmouth, at stated hours, calling off the end of the pier for passengers to Cowes and Southampton. During the season there are also packets from Ryde to Brighton, and to Havre-de-Grace; as well as for the trip (generally a very pleasant one) round the island. A coach is established between Ryde and Newport. With regard to post-chaises, cars, sociables, and gigs, for inland excursions, or to the back of the island, such are at all times readily obtainable. Neither should the accommodations for sailing excursions pass without notice: they are excellent of their kind, and the pleasure they offer may at most times be enjoyed, even by the delicate and timid, as the Solent affords ample space for this species of enjoyment, and its waters are seldom disturbed in a degree calculated to inspire the slightest alarm.

Among the amusements of the place may be reckoned the *Assemblies*, held weekly, during the season, at Hellyer's Library and Reading-rooms, Union Street; the *Regatta*, which usually takes place in the month of September; and the *Fair*, held July 6th in the High Street.

Our description of this town cannot conclude better than with the observations of Dr. Shaw, addressed to the valetudinarian, in his work on the "Influence of Climates."—"Of all the situations in the island, Ryde appears to me to deserve a preference as a summer residence. *** It possesses most of the advantages of a country residence, together with those of a sea-bathing place. The neighbourhood is also very beautiful, and favourable for exercise."

Walks.

1. *From Ryde to Sea View.*

None can enjoy the beauties to be found in the vicinity of Ryde, to equal advantage with the pedestrian. Our plan will

therefore embrace a few of the most pleasing *Walks* in the first place: after which we shall arrange an *Excursion* or two for the convenience of those, who, going to greater distances, may prefer the accommodation of a carriage.

The walk to SEA VIEW is extremely agreeable. On quitting Ryde we cross *The Dover*, a tract of common land containing nothing remarkable in itself, but memorable as the burial-place of a number of the unfortunate sailors, who perished in the Royal George on the 29th of August, 1782, and whose bodies were here washed on shore. The graves of these unhappy sufferers appeared for a long time as so many little grassy hillocks; but the action of the weather, and the frequent foot of the passenger, has at length rendered them undistinguishable from the general surface of the sterile sand. Were this spot levelled and improved by public spirit, guided by the hand of taste, its contiguity to the town would no doubt render it a favourite spot for promenaders; as, from its situation, it commands a beautiful marine view.

The catastrophe of the Royal George has been too often related, to render apology necessary for our avoiding its minute details. We shall merely observe, that the deplorable event by which one of the noblest ships, most complete crews, and bravest of commanders, that ever graced the British navy, were lost to their country;—

> "When Kempenfeldt went down,
> With twice four hundred men;"—

happened at Spithead, at a nearly equal distance between Ryde and Portsmouth; and was occasioned, as is well known, by want of due care in careening the majestic vessel. Having been heeled too much on one side, with her gun-ports open, a sudden squall threw her on her beam-ends, so that the flag at her mast-head actually dipped into the sea; then rolling in the opposite direction, her yard-arms met the surface of the

waves: she righted; but, lamentably, had by this time shipped so much water, that it was only to sink almost immediately. All who were between decks, the Admiral included, were involved in one common fate; but the majority of those who happened to be on the upper deck, were rescued by the boats dispatched to their assistance from other vessels. A victualler, which had been quietly lying alongside, shared in the calamity; being literally sucked to the bottom by the whirlpool occasioned through the sudden descent of so vast a fabric as the Royal George, at that time the leviathan of our navy.

Our path from the Dover is by a winding way through a beautiful hanging wood, which skirts the grounds of *Appley.* This mansion, the residence of Mrs. Bennett, graces the ascent of a hill, rising gently from the more precipitous site of the wood, and possesses all the beauties of a fine natural situation improved by art. The views from this spot are truly delightful; and the exquisite richness of the surrounding foliage renders the home-scene nearly equally enchanting.

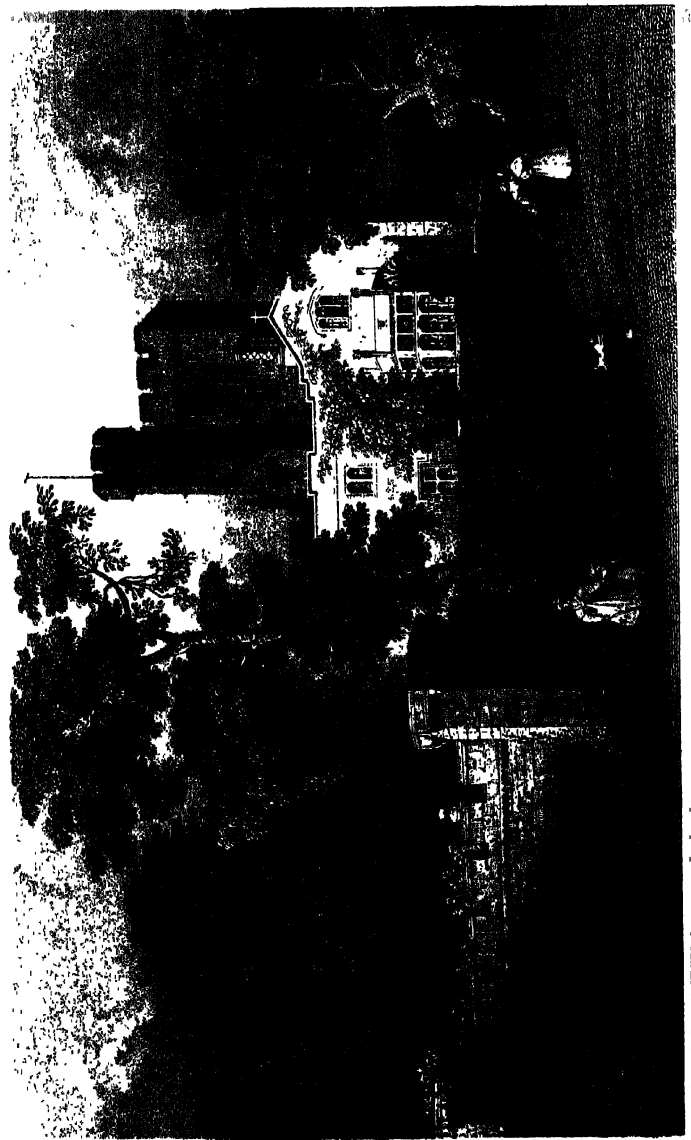
Again reaching the shore, Puckpool Cliff appears on the right, with *Cliff Cottage,* the rustic seat, and well-wooded grounds, of Captain Wyatt. *Westridge,* the handsome modern mansion of John Young, esq., is next seen in the same direction: after which we pass what was formerly a large Saltern, but its buildings are now devoted to the habitation of various humble families. *Sea Field,* Mrs. Beach's residence, in the modern cottage style, next occurs; and we then reach the extremity of the walk we have chosen, namely, SEA VIEW.

This village was formerly called Old Fort, and its site retains some features which show the propriety of its first designation. The houses are disposed in the form of an angle; of which the shortest side, or that nearest Ryde, looks direct into Portsmouth harbour: the other, facing eastward, has a fine view of the British channel, and the various objects besides in that direction. It is a truly *marine* situation.

The road, striking inland from this point, leaves on the left *Sea Grove*, the residence of the Rev. T. Le Marchant. The house occupies an elevated and most pleasing site, with a lawn steeply sloping from its front. It is also very charmingly embowered in the trees, from which, together with its aspect, it takes name. *Fairy Hill*, the abode of Mrs. Glynn, is at a trifling distance. This is a regularly-built brick house, with a situation very much agreeing in character with that last described. Within sight is also the villa of J. Leacock, esq., commandingly placed, and of Italianised exterior. *Woodlands*, belonging to Charles Cooch, esq., merits its sylvan epithet by the well-grown timber with which it is surrounded.

We have quite left the shore to gain the vicinity of these objects, and are returning to the town by the carriage road. Nothing further occurs until we pass *St. Clare*, the elegant castellated mansion of Lord Vernon. The Tudor style of Gothic predominates in this building, the whole of which is in more than ordinary good taste. The grounds are laid out in the most approved modern style. A view of no common beauty, from the keep tower, completes the attractions of this delightful seat.

St. John's, the property of Sir Richard Simeon, possesses most of the advantages of St. Clare. It is at once embosomed in wood, and so situated as to command a prospect of Ryde and its pier, with extensive sea-views, the Hampshire coast, &c. The domain is less *trim* in its style than Lord Vernon's, but the noble trees with which it is adorned perhaps more than compensate for that disadvantage.

Two pretty rustic lodges on the right, mark the private or family entrance to St. John's. After passing these, the road ascends till we reach the turnpike, near which appears the mansion of Captain Ribouleau, R. N. Regaining Ryde by the south end of Lower Player Street, a cottage of exceedingly pleasing character, there situated, will deserve at least passing

attention. It is in what is very commonly called the Swiss style, but which might be more properly designated as a mixture of the Swiss with the ornamented English rustic.

2. *To the Mill at Aldermore.*

An easy effort, the distance not exceeding a mile and a half. The direction is south, through Upper Ryde; and will lead, after passing the turnpike, by ***Haylands***, the seat of Admiral Locke. ***Upton House***, the residence of James P. Lind, esq., M. D., is also in the vicinity. The view from the mill, on a favourable day, realises some of the most magnificent effects of a well-executed panorama. The principal objects are,—north, the Solent, and the coast beyond; east, Bembridge Down, with the fine sheet of water called Braden Haven; south, Nunwell and Ashey Downs, the latter distinguished by the peculiar rotundity of its swell, and by its sea-mark; west, inland scenery, possessing much of the richness that so generally characterises the island.

If the pedestrian varies his return by taking the road from the mill which leads to ***Small-Brook Heath***, he will find it add to the gratification of his walk.

3. *To Binstead and Quarr Abbey.*

Spencer Road, leading westward, conducts to the objects of our present route. Pass on the left the modern-built residence of W. H. Hughes, esq.: see to the right the villas of the duke of Buckingham and earl Spencer.

Shortly, in the direction last mentioned, occurs ***Bucklands***, a mansion in the style of James the First's time, with some features of the Gothic; it belongs to —— Utterson, esq. Also on the right, observe a neat Doric lodge, at the entrance to ***Ryde House***, the seat of George Player, esq.

The road is now quitted for a foot-path through the fields, which undulates through most pleasing rural scenery. The

residence of Captain Brigstocke, R. N., is seen on the left, at a trifling distance. The foot-path ends in the church-yard of BINSTEAD; and the *Church*, of course, affords the first subject for remark.

This edifice possesses nothing to interest the antiquary or general observer, if we except a rudely sculptured stone over the door of the porch on the south side, which seems to have been inserted in the wall at some rebuilding of that portion of the structure. It is commonly called "The Idol," and is evidently more antique than the work surrounding it. Some ingenuity might be exercised in guessing its entire meaning; but the upper part is plainly intended for a man, who appears seated, with his feet resting upon a dog's or wolf's head. This relic may very possibly be of Saxon origin, as may the key-stone beneath, which represents a figure not uncommon with the barbarous sculptors of those and the Danish times, namely, a species of dragon in the act of biting his tail. It may be worthy of remark, that "the arch that separates the nave and chancel" is *not*, as some of the Guide-books have it, "of considerable antiquity," being nowise distinguished in that respect from the rest of the building.

North of the church stands the seat of John Fleming, esq., the grounds of which are planned with much taste and attention to picturesque effect. They slope, precipitously in some places, down to the shore, where there is a bathing house, with various accompaniments, which, if not exactly *Swiss*, are exceedingly pretty.

The grounds of Binstead *Parsonage* adjoin Mr. Fleming's on the west. Their owner, the Rev. Augustus Hewitt, very politely admits the public to view them on certain days; namely, Fridays, before one, and Mondays, after four o'clock. The house is only a pleasing cottage, a picture of elegant rustication. But the little paradise which surrounds it, must be seen to be properly appreciated. It forms an assemblage of knolls and

lawns, flower-beds, tufts of elegant shrubs, and groupes of noble evergreens; with rock-work, and other artificial decorations, amongst the latter of which a delightful rustic summer-house should be specially noticed. A terrace looks out beautifully upon the Solent, through breaks in the umbrageous trees that line the shore.

Our walk is continued by the pleasant foot-path which conducts, through *Quarr Copse,* to the remains of the ABBEY. This once famous monastic establishment was founded in the reign of Henry the First, by Baldwin, earl of Devon, and by him dedicated to St. Mary. It was of the Cistertian order, and one of the first of that class in England. After receiving the remains of its noble founder, his countess, and their son, and flourishing in monkish state through a long series of years, this establishment fell before the spirit of reform generated in the times of Henry the Eighth. After the dissolution, one George Mills, a merchant of Southampton, purchased it for the sake of its materials, and succeeded, beyond many of his compeers, who engaged in similar undertakings, in his work of destruction. All that even Protestantism should have regarded as venerable and sacred, was mercilessly levelled and dispersed: and so complete was the spoliation, that long masses of the walls, which, when perfect, enclosed the abbey precincts, thirty acres in extent, are now almost the only vestiges remaining What appears to have been the gable at the east end of the chapel, is so mantled with ivy that scarcely a portion of that structure is visible. The refectory is more perfect, from having been converted into a barn. Other detached parts, shewing here and there a fragment of an arch or door-way, are visible. A farm-house occupies what may have been near the centre of the buildings, and has evidently been constructed with the refuse stones which were left behind.

The epithet Quarr is supposed to have been derived from

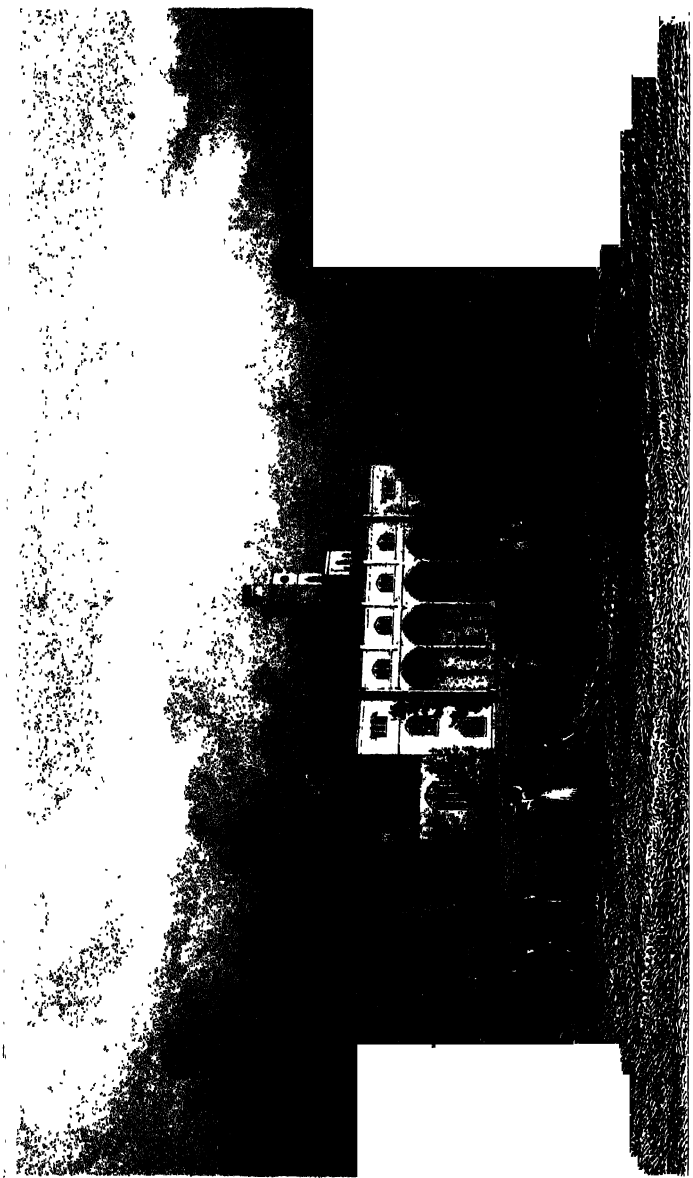
the stone quarries in the neighbourhood, from which the Abbey was built, and which also served for the re-edification of the body of Winchester cathedral. At least the registers of Winchester inform us, that when William of Wykeham undertook that work, the material was supplied from the Isle of Wight, and that the abbot of QUARR was commissioned to provide carriages for its conveyance as far as the sea-shore. The stone dug from these quarries is still in common use. It varies much in quality, being in part exceedingly hard and durable, and in part light, porous, and admitting of rapid calcination. The inferior sort appears in the construction of nearly all the garden-walls, out-buildings, and cottages, in the neighbourhood.

The walk may be extended from hence, if it is thought desirable, by tracing another foot-path, leading to *Fishbourne*, also called *Fish House*, a little village situated at the mouth of the Wootton river, where there is a ship-builder's yard, from which even frigates have been launched, as have also several of those fine vessels belonging to the members of the Yacht Club. The return to Ryde is practicable along the shore, when the tide is down; or it may be pursued by keeping onward after passing through the village, and falling into the road from Newport. The country rises into considerable elevations on both sides of the river, and is finely wooded, in parts even to the water's edge.

EXCURSIONS.

1. *To Wootton Bridge, and Fern Hill; returning by Firestone Copse, and Binstead Hill.*

This is a pleasant drive, though short, and not presenting any very remarkable objects. To Wootton Bridge, by the Newport road, is three miles. Soon after leaving Ryde, observe on the right *Westmount*, the seat of Mrs. Lind.

Arriving at WOOTTON BRIDGE, *Kite Hill*, the residence of

Mrs. Popham, is seen on the left. This village is one of the most pleasingly situated in the island. It is placed in a hollow, through the centre of which flows the Wootton River, an object in itself highly picturesque, especially at high water, when, with all its accompaniments of shipping, the wooded eminences around, and the beautiful contiguous grounds of Fern Hill, a scene is presented that can scarcely fail to gratify every visitant. A passage-boat, between this village and Portsmouth, goes and returns daily.

Leaving this pretty spot, and gaining the top of the hill, a road to the right, leading from the house and pleasing grounds of the Rev. R. Walton White, conducts to the *Church*, which is a dependency upon that of Whippingham. It is without any features of interest; and the only point of importance in its history is, that it is erected on the site of a former edifice, whose destruction was occasioned by fire. In the same direction lies ***King's Quay***, about two miles from the village, where King John is said to have secluded himself, as noticed in our historical sketch of the Isle.

The road to the left leads to *Wootton Common;* whither proceeding, we are struck with a fine view of the Downs and the adjacent country. The common is now completely enclosed, and possesses nothing more remarkable than the neat cottage of George Brannon, the self-taught artist, whose "Views," considering the circumstances under which they have been produced, must be admitted by all to do credit both to his native talent and his industry.

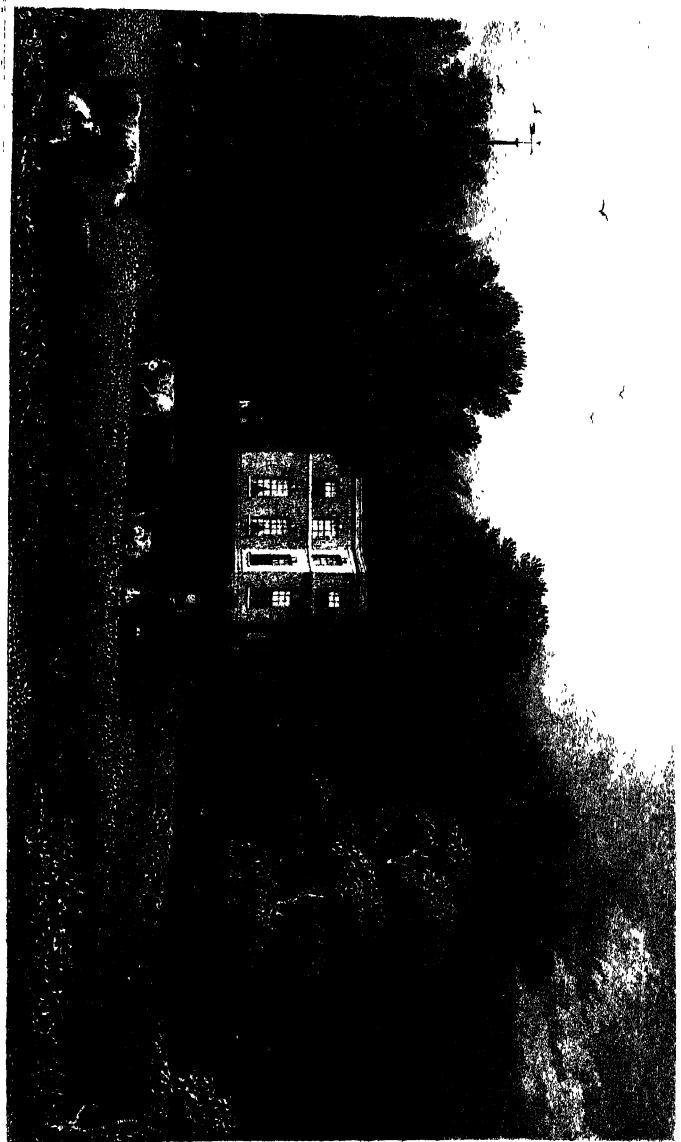
Before reaching the common, we have passed on the left FERN HILL, the seat of Samuel Sanders, Esq. This mansion, erected by the late Duke of Bolton, when governor of the Island, is in a style not quite calculated to convey a favourable idea of the erector's taste. It is *meant* for Gothic. A lofty tower, battlemented, and crowned by a circular observatory looks imposingly, it is true, around. But the general aspect

is more church-like than domestic; and the noble trees which rise in rear of and about the structure, and the magnificent evergreens and shrubs that adorn the grounds, together with the beauty in other respects of those grounds themselves, will generally be admitted to form the chief attractions of Fern Hill.

Again reaching Wootton, the return to Ryde by Firestone Copse and Binstead Hill has been already indicated. It is recommended by variety, but affords no scope for remark.

2. *To St. Helen's, Brading, Yaverland, and Bembridge Point; returning by Ashey Down.*

Taking the Brading road from Ryde, the tourist will have on his left the various objects described in the walk to Sea View: but he will avoid the direct route to Brading when he reaches St. Clare, through adopting the *détour* by St. Helen's.

Pass the entrance to *The Priory* on the left, with a part of the noble woods attached to the demesne. This mansion and grounds, late the seat of Sir Nash Grose, now that of his nephew, Edward Grose Smith, Esq., have long been regarded as constituting one of the most delightful retreats in the Island. The house is well and handsomely built of free-stone: it overlooks a fine sloping lawn, and a stretch of the richly wooded scenery in which this part of the Isle of Wight certainly excels every other, and commands besides a fine aquatic and coast view. The forest trees are of luxuriant growth, and flourish down to the water's edge: while the magnolias, hydrangias, myrtles, and other ornamental shrubs, attain a size and beauty rarely surpassed elsewhere. There are extensive wood-walks cut in the cliffs; and the sands are delightful. This seat has been the residence of the Grose family, and their ancestors, since the time of James the Second. It derived its name from the lands (which form the greater part of the parish of St. Helen's) having formerly belonged to a priory of Cluniac,

monks, founded before the year 1155. No traces exist of the monastic buildings, which are supposed to have stood in a field near the old church: but towards the extremity of the grounds are remains of a watch-tower, the history of which is buried in obscurity.

The *old* Church of St. Helen's, just spoken of, is a ruin, consisting of little more than the tower, which, while the rest of the edifice was suffered to be washed away by the sea, has been preserved and strengthened as a sea-mark. It stands near the entrance to Brading harbour.

The *present* Church is passed on our route. Its chancel is the only part not entirely rebuilt in 1830; and even that is not older than 1719, when the devastations committed upon the previous structure rendered a new church necessary. This chancel contains several memorials of the Grose family; and, among the rest, of Sir Nash Grose, Knt. one of the judges of the court of King's Bench, who died in 1814, and of his only son, Captain Edward Grose, of the Foot Guards, who was killed at the battle of Waterloo. The part lately rebuilt is distinguished by a transept, with a handsome window at each end; though the entire edifice is small, containing only two hundred and ninety-seven sittings, one hundred and twenty-nine of which are free. Over the altar is a well-executed painting of a cross surrounded by a glory.

The village of *St. Helen's* is built round a rural green. It commands a fine view of the British Channel, Bembridge Point, with its pretty chapel, situated on the opposite side of the entrance to Brading haven, Bembridge and Brading downs, &c.

On the right, just before entering Brading, observe *Nunwell*, the large old family mansion of Sir William Oglander, Bart. whose family is the most ancient in the Island, having come over from Normandy with the Conqueror. The house groups well with the screen of trees, and the down, in rear

and on one side of it. The park contains several oak trees of large size and great antiquity.

Brading is rendered picturesque by its situation on the opposite slopes of two hills. Several of the houses are antique, composed of timber frame-work, enclosing compartments of bricks placed in what is called the herring-bone fashion. This is an ancient market-town—" The Kyng's Towne of Bradynge," as it is styled on the common seal—paying an annual fee-farm rent of four marks into the exchequer, and being governed by two bailiffs, a recorder, and thirteen jurats. Its first charter bears date in the reign of Edward the Sixth. It has also a court of *pie-poudre*, and two fairs, held annually on the 12th of May and 2nd of October. The market-house and town-hall form together an inconsiderable structure near the *Church*.

The last-mentioned edifice is supposed to occupy the site of *the first erection for Christian worship in the Island, the* founder of which was Wilfrid, bishop of Winchester, who is said to have consecrated it in the year 704. From that circumstance, some have imagined that this is Wilfrid's church, and it is customary to speak of it as " the oldest in the Isle of Wight." But there is nothing in the structure to warrant our receiving even the latter account as correct. It would require an antiquarian dissertation to shew the reasons upon which our opinion is grounded; and the present work is not the most proper field for arguments upon such a point. We will only observe, that the neighbouring church of Yaverland is unquestionably the older edifice; and *that* is supposed to have been erected not earlier than the reign of Edward the First. Brading church, however, is doubtless an antique and interesting building: it is large, having a body, chancel, and side-aisles; and its massive round pillars, surmounted by Norman capitals, and supporting pointed arches, are alone a study for the antiquary. This was one scene of the pious labours of

the late Rev. Legh Richmond, who was for a time curate of Brading; and the front of the gallery exhibits an ingenious contrivance of his, which, by means of a variety of little sliding boards, inscribed with letters and figures, shows the congregation the psalm to be sung, and the version. There are some old tombs in the communion place, and in Sir William Oglander's chapel, or family burial-place, which is separated from the rest of the church by an oak screen. The most ancient legible date of these monuments is 1567: two of them have full-length figures in armour, of solid elm wood, originally painted in their proper colours, and gilt, but now disfigured by coats of dirty white. There are also several old table tombs, whose inscriptions are illegible, in the church-yard; and here is the celebrated epitaph to Mrs. Ann Berry, set to music by Dr. Calcott, beginning

"Forgive, blest shade, the tributary tear."

This, and two other well-written epitaphs, one to the memory of Mr. Berry, and another for an infant of the name of Dyer, were from the pen of the late Rev. Mr. Gill, curate of Newchurch. An inscription of equal celebrity informs us, in its concluding line, that

"JANE, the Young Cottager, lies buried here."

Many of our readers will scarcely need to be informed that this interesting female was a resident in Brading: and such readers will be equally well acquainted with the fact, that at a short distance from the town stood *Knighton House*, where, for a short time, in the capacity of a servant, lived the "Dairyman's daughter." Mr. Richmond may be said to have immortalised the names of both these humble personages by his well-known tracts.

Brading *Haven*, which has been alluded to, is an arm of the sea at high water, and, when the tide recedes, a marsh of very

considerable extent, comprising nearly eight hundred and sixty acres. It allows of small vessels lying at the town quay.

We cross Brading Down to arrive at *Yaverland.* Bembridge Down appears on the left; and a stream, of most serpentine form, lying like a silver braid along the meadows between. This stream, though nameless, traverses a great part of the island before it empties itself into Brading haven. Though so inconsiderable in size, it is called by the country people the *main* river, and it turns several corn-mills.

Yaverland is made interesting only by its little *Church,* already said to have been erected in the time of Edward the First. Indeed, it seems likely that parts of it are more ancient; especially the curious round-headed arch into the chancel, which, with much good taste, is preserved in its ancient state, though the walls around it are encrusted with whitewash. The south door-way has an arch of similar form and character. On Ash Wednesday, 1833, several of the stately elm-trees contiguous to this church were blown down, and three of them fell in as many different directions around and close to the sacred building, committing only the trifling injury of chipping off a piece of one of the tiles on the south side!—an almost miraculous preservation of the little structure, in the eyes of the surrounding peasantry.

The manor farm-house, which stands close to Yaverland church, is a mansion of the times of Elizabeth, or her successor, James the First. It is probable that the church was originally only a chapel for the use of the manorial lords, as it is still a dependency upon that of Brading.

Yaverland may be said to form part of the peninsula which ends in *Bembridge Point,* where is the small village before noticed as overlooking the haven towards St. Helen's. The chapel here is of pleasing form, and quite a modern erection, having been consecrated by the present Bishop of Winchester in 1827. The situation of the neat houses around it must be

allowed by all to be one of no common beauty. The celebrated *Culver Cliffs* range along the opposite side of the peninsula; they are four hundred feet high, and command, as may be supposed, a most extensive view, of which the main feature is the broad bosom of the British Channel. In these cliffs is a cavern called *Hermit's Hole,* which may be visited by a path from the top; but the descent is not unattended with danger, and the object is not worth the risk that must be run to accomplish it. Culver Cliffs were the scene of the Rev. Legh Richmond's meeting with the "Negro Servant," which, together with the surrounding scenery, he so well describes in the tract published under that title.

Prior to the return from Yaverland to Ryde, the tourist may view *Sandown Fort,* built to command the wide-spreading bay of the same name, and thus to defend the only avenue upon this part of the coast by nature left open to the descent of an enemy. The fortification in itself possesses nothing to interest: it is of quadrangular form, and has a bastion at each angle. It was built with the materials of one of Henry the Eighth's castles, which, by the time of Charles the First, it was found indispensable to remove, on account of the inroads made by the sea. Contiguous is a cottage, pointed out as once the residence of that celebrated political character, John Wilkes.

The return may then be varied by passing over *Ashey Down,* on whose apex is erected a triangular pyramid of hewn stone, about twenty feet high, having its point as it were obliquely cut off: it serves as a mark for ships coming into St. Helen's Roads, or Spithead, having been built for that purpose, in 1735, at the expense of government. The view from the summit of the down is one of the finest in the island, being as extensive as it is beautifully diversified.

CHAPTER III.

COWES, AND *ITS* VICINITY.

THE town of COWES bears much the same relation to Southampton, as that of Ryde does to Portsmouth. Like Ryde, it is the point of communication between the Isle of Wight and the nearest place of importance on the opposite shore: and it must be added, that the approach by the steam-boat is calculated to impress a very favourable idea of it upon the mind of the visitant. The harbour and roadstead being generally occupied by shipping, present a very lively appearance: and the town itself, distinguished by the titles of East and West, from the respective positions of its parts on the banks of the river Medina, opens most agreeably on the spectator as the vessel advances. A conspicuous object on the eastern shore is the Castle built by John Nash, Esq. with the rich foliage with which it is surrounded. On the opposite bank, West Cowes, by far the more important portion of the place, is seen to great advantage. Here, West Cowes Castle, and the villas near, with the Royal Yacht Club-House, the new Chapel, and the trees intermixed throughout, form an admirable group. The charm is well-nigh dispelled, it is true, on entering the High Street, which is both narrow and winding: but it revives in the delightful, ever-undulating environs. Many of the houses, even in the High Street itself, have a beautiful look-out seaward; and some of the best lodging-houses being there situated, derive convenience of course from their neighbourhood to the numerous and excellent shops.

The general appearance of the place is far less regular than that of Ryde; but it has recommendations peculiarly its own, among which, the noble entrance to the river, and the naval bustle usually attendant upon a port, must be especially mentioned.

The period at which Cowes literally appears in "all its glory," is that of the annual *Regatta*, which usually takes place in August. At that season, as a contemporary writer remarks, "the royal yachts frequently honour the Club by their attendance; a man-of-war or two is likewise ordered here for the occasion; the brig, schooner, and cutter-yachts of all dimensions, are dressed, as it is termed, in the various colours and signals of the R. Y. C. (Royal Yacht Club); the steam-packets, with numerous private yachts, and almost countless boats, from the ornamental canoe to the man-of-war's launch, are passing in every direction: while the peculiar character of the scenery presents the whole in so conveniently bounded a circumference, as adds material beauty to this grand naval spectacle." The *Royal Yacht Club House*, which may be viewed as the focus of this interesting scene, being the place at which the noblemen and gentlemen of the club hold their meetings, stands on the PARADE, and forms a conspicuous feature of that delightful spot. It is distinguished by the semaphore, and other apparatus, for the display of the signals made by the members of the club to their respective vessels in the road-stead. The Club, which was established in the year 1812, is graced by the names of some of the most distinguished among our English nobility; with Lord Yarborough, and the Earl of Belfast, for Commodore and Vice-Commodore.

A little eastward of the Club-house stands a villa, but a few years since the property, and occasional residence, of King George the Fourth. G. H. Ward, Esq. of Northwood House, is its present owner; and Lord Listowell its occupant. Two pleasing houses, belonging respectively to A. Corbett, Esq.

and Sir John Hippisley, Bart., intervene, in the opposite direction, between the Club House and the *Castle;* which latter was originally only one of the small semi-circular batteries erected by Henry the Eighth. The work of that monarch still remains, and nearly in its first state; exhibiting the peculiarities of the limestone of which it is composed, both as to the hardness and durability of the stones, and the singular little cavities appearing every where upon their surfaces; being occasioned by the perishing of the small shells imbedded in the original substance. The battery mounts eight guns. Only a small part of the mansion, which forms the upper portion of the structure, is ancient; both it, and the grounds attached, having received considerable additions and improvements of late years, particularly from the Marquis of Anglesea, who is the present Governor, and some part of whose family is generally resident here.

The Castle forms one extremity of the Parade: the *Marine Hotel* stands at the other. This house, with the *Fountain* and the *Vine* in the High Street, are the three principal Inns. All of them afford accommodations for landing: but the principal work of this kind, and what may indeed be considered as the *Town-quay*, is that connected with the premises of the Fountain. Here the steam-packets discharge and receive their passengers, without the intervention of boats; a facility for which visitors are indebted to the late George Ward, Esq. at whose expense this great public improvement was erected.

The *Baths* are contiguous to the Parade at its west end. They afford all the customary accommodations. Owing to the steepness of the beach, the machines are lowered by means of windlasses; and from the same circumstance it arises that the bather may here add depth of water to the calm surface and the security which are enjoyed at Ryde. The shore is naturally rocky at this part of the island; but care has been taken to remove any impediments to pleasant bathing that might have resulted therefrom.

After the Baths we should perhaps mention the *Libraries*. These are two in number, both situated in the High Street, and are known respectively by the names of their proprietors, Messrs. Pinhorn and Moir.

In public buildings, Cowes does not stand conspicuous. That which may be considered of the first importance as to its object, the *Town-hall*, is a perfectly plain and unobtrusive structure. In it the commissioners for improving the place hold their weekly meetings. Below is the *Market-house*. The whole was erected in pursuance of an Act of Parliament obtained in the year 1816.

The *Church*, or more properly *Chapel*, is a dependency upon that of Northwood, in which parish Cowes is situated. It is one of the very few edifices of its kind, whose origin may be traced to the time of the Protector Cromwell, having been built in the year 1653. Owing to the peculiar spirit of that age, it was not consecrated, by the bishop of the diocese, until 1662; and then was not dedicated, as is customary, to any particular saint. A Mr. Richard Stephens endowed it, in 1671, with £5 per annum; and, says the historian Worsley, "it was further endowed, in the year 1679, by Bishop Morley, with the sum of £20 per annum, provided the inhabitants paid their minister (who is always a person of their own choosing) the sum of £40 per annum; but in case of a failure on their part, the said endowment to be forfeited for ever." It is not the least singular part of the history of this chapel, that, notwithstanding Worsley's assertion of the right of presentation by the inhabitants, two clergymen in succession have been appointed to the incumbency by the vicar of Northwood; owing to their permission of which, as it is said, the townsmen have lost their ancient privilege. In 1811, the building was enlarged and improved, at the expense of nearly £3000, by the late George Ward, Esq.; and it owes to the same gentleman the tower at the west end, which also serves as the family

mausoleum. The style of this tower is certainly more singular than tasteful: the architect was John Nash, Esq. The monument within, to the memory of Mrs. Ward, should be inspected by every visitor.

A striking contrast to this chapel, as regards architectural effect, is afforded by the "Church or Chapel of the Holy Trinity," consecrated June 21st, 1832, and erected at the sole expense of an individual, Mrs. Goodwin. This very pleasing edifice stands commandingly on that part of the hill, commonly called the West Cliff, which overlooks the Baths. Its Gothic character, externally, is chastely and appropriately sustained; while, internally, it may lay just claim to the praise of elegance. Here, the long pointed windows on each side have not their effect spoiled, as is so commonly the ease, by side galleries: and there is a charming lightness and taste in the decorations of the trusses under the ceiling, as well as in the altar screen, which, ornamented with niches, canopies, and open work, is well contrasted by the small but good stained-glass window at the east end. The exterior is of white brick, with window-cases, mullions, &c. of Bath stone. The architect was Mr. Bramble, of Portsmouth. Mrs. Goodwin, to whom we have already said the town is indebted for this ecclesiastical structure, is a lady residing at the extremity of the West Cliff, who also gave the freehold ground, and endowed the chapel with the interest of £1000 in the 3½ per cents, as well as with a further sum for repairs. These endowments, it is true, were demanded by an Act for the regulation of new churches built from private sources, which passed in the present reign: but that circumstance detracts nothing from the munificence of such an example.

The *Roman Catholic Chapel* is perhaps the next most important religious edifice. It stands in Carvel Lane, and presents a brick elevation, in external appearance more domestic than ecclesiastical. The interior is lofty, and fitted up with

some pretensions to that splendour of effect so common in structures appropriated to the service of the Catholic faith.

The *Wesleyan Chapel*, in Birmingham Row, has a very neat front of Swanage stone. Though with scarcely an architectural feature, except a pediment and cornice, it has an extremely chaste and pleasing effect. The interior is correspondently handsome and appropriate.

The *Independent Chapel*, on Sun Hill, is a plain brick edifice, not requiring particular remark.

Of religious and benevolent institutions, Cowes, to its honour, possesses its full share. Among these may be reckoned the National Schools, erected in 1821, on a site bestowed by the late George Ward, Esq.; various Sunday Schools; a Ladies' Bible Association; the Seaman's Library; the Parochial Lending Library; a Friendly Society, a Dispensary, &c.

The *West Cliff*, with its delightfully situated cottages, deserves particular mention. It may be visited in connexion with the Parade, of which, indeed, it may be viewed as a continuation; and, certainly, few places can boast a more charming intermixture of trees, gardens, and pleasure-grounds, with pleasing cottages, and handsome houses, than is presented by the whole line from the Marine Hotel to the end of the Cliff. Pursuing this route by the beach, the villas of the Earl of Belfast and Lord Grantham will be seen on the left; or, taking the road, the visitor will pass *Trafalgar House*, the occasional residence of the Duke of Norfolk. By extending the walk we shall reach the most northern point of the island, which, rather strangely, bears the name of *Egypt*. Here stands *Egypt House*, the property of Sir Thomas Tancred, Bart., but the residence of the Misses Tod. Its site is an agreeable lawn, which is only separated by a stone wall from the beach. Though the greater part is modern, having been rebuilt about twenty-five years since, an antique character is well preserved throughout the edifice; and, notwithstanding its cheerful out-

look upon the Solent, it has somewhat of an air of seclusion almost monastic.

Strangers frequently conclude this ramble from the Parade, or the West Cliff, by proceeding to ***Gurnard's Bay,*** a spot not remarkable except as having been once distinguished by a town, where now stand only two or three insignificant cottages. Charles the Second is said to have landed here, on occasion of a visit which he paid to the island.

Before proceeding further in our notice of the environs of West Cowes, it is incumbent upon us to mention *Northwood Park*, the seat of George Henry Ward, Esq. The spacious house attached to this charming demesne, crowns the hill that overlooks the town, and is contiguous to the *old* chapel, the grounds communicating with the cemetery by a light iron gate. The views from this elevated site are of equal extent and beauty, both seaward and inland. The grounds are highly ornamental and tasteful, in situation much resembling those attached to the Parsonage, and to Mr. Fleming's seat, at Binstead; but they are less picturesque and romantic, as regards the descent towards the shore.

The walk from Cowes called the ***Debourne Walk*** leaves this delightful seat on the left, and passes the pretty cottage orné of Mrs. Wilding. It is distinguished as the Debourne Walk, from the name of the manor of which G. H. Ward, Esq. is the lord. Both for beauty and variety of scenery, it will yield the palm to none on the north side of the island.

Another favourite ramble is the ***Mill Walk,*** which also affords delightful views, especially of the town itself, with the harbour and road-stead. By this route we pass ***West Hill,*** the residence of the Misses Ward, a cottage in the English rustic style; also ***Mill-Hill House,*** the seat of Mrs. Admiral Osborne. ***Grove Cottage,*** the residence of Captain Knight; and ***Moor-House,*** a Gothic villa, belonging to Mrs. James Ward, are in the same neighbourhood. The walk may be extended to the

parish *Church*, or that of Northwood, which is two miles and a half distant; but the gratification to the pedestrian will chiefly arise from the objects by the way, as the sacred structure contains in itself nothing to interest.

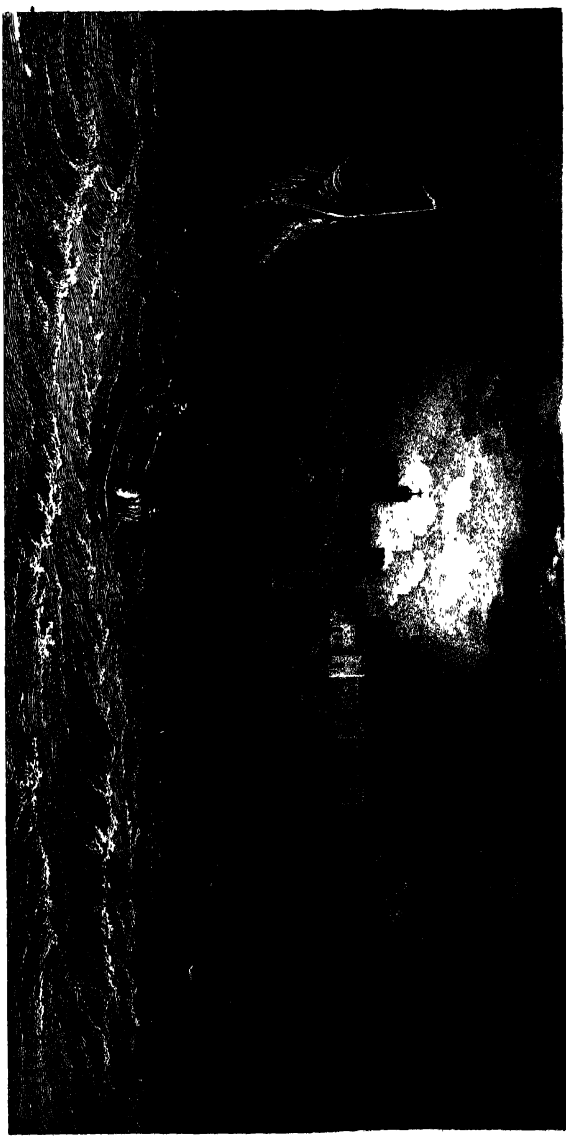
East Cowes

Is approached from its opposite neighbour by a *ferry*, at which the regular demand upon the passenger is one halfpenny; though few, it is to be imagined, restrict their liberality to the fare. Here stands the *Custom-House*, which is for the island at large; also an *Hotel, Baths*, and other appendages proper to a watering-place. The parish church is that of Whippingham, which is two miles and a half distant: but, for the convenience of members of the establishment, a church has been recently erected (by subscription) in the valley below East Cowes Castle, for which John Nash, Esq. gave the ground, and was the architect. Of this edifice all that can properly be said is, that it is small, has *no* style, and is plain as plainness itself. The Independents also have a chapel here.

East Cowes Castle, already more than once mentioned, stands on the brow of the hill that looks towards West Cowes, and, together with its grounds, forms a point of attraction with most visitors to either of those places. The site is well selected for a residence of the Gothic character; and the general effect of this castle, with its surrounding woods, must be admitted to be imposing. On a nearer inspection, it is seen to unite the features of the castellated mansion of a late date, with those of the baronial strong-hold of a much earlier period; the former, doubtless, for convenience, the latter for the sake of antiquated and striking appearance. Whether such an union be consistent with correct taste, is a question which Mr. Nash should be much more qualified to answer than ourselves: but in this, as in many other instances, we confess to have

been but little struck with the propriety of machicolated towers frowning over the elegancies of domestic architecture. When time has divested a style of building of its objects and meaning, it should be either wholly laid aside, or, if adopted in the way of imitation, the imitation should be complete, and should admit of nothing incongruous: an axiom this, which has been but little studied by the architect and proprietor of East Cowes Castle.

Elm Cottage, the property of Mrs. Lambert, is a more than commonly pretty rustic dwelling, situated opposite the lodge entrance to Mr. Nash's seat. Other objects worthy of attention in this neighbourhood are, *Osborne*, the extensive mansion of Charles Lambert, Esq. and *Osborne Cottage*, occupied by Mrs. Burton. Nearer Cowes are the villas of Messrs. Shedden, Miss Barrington, and J. Auldjo, Esq.

Norris Castle, a most conspicuous feature in the coast-view of this part of the Island, may be approached either by the road we have just quitted, or by a walk along the shore: the latter, of course, should be adopted only when the tide is favourable. Sir J. Wyattville (then Mr. Wyatt) erected this singular structure for the late Lord Henry Seymour, who took much pride in it, and evidently received pleasure from the visits of strangers to his domain. As a specimen of the defensive architecture of the age which it affects, it certainly offers fewer incongruities than East Cowes Castle; yet, as a whole, it is infinitely less pleasing to the eye, as well as less elegant, than that edifice. The deception as to its apparent antiquity, however, is complete to those unacquainted with the details of an ancient English castle; and numbers, who might first see Norris from the deck of a steam-boat, would be readily impressed with the idea that centuries had elapsed since the period of its erection. The grounds attached are open to the inspection of the public, and will repay the exertion of a stroll through them, The Stables, which are on a princely scale,

the Pier, Bathing-House, and Sea-Walls, all erections of the late noble owner, merit at least passing attention from the visitor.

The road to WHIPPINGHAM affords, on looking back, a very picturesque view of West Cowes, together with the Medina, the hills to the south, the Solent and Hampshire coast on the north, and on the right, near at hand, Mr. Nash's Castle. The very neat little parish *Church*, here situated, small as it is, consists of a body, chancel, transept, tower, and spire. Close to it is the *Parsonage*, which, like the church, is most pleasingly seated on the river's bank.

Padmore, the seat of C. Smith, Esq., lies a little beyond the village. The house is partly old, and was converted from a farm-house into a seat by a former occupant. It commands a lovely view up the Medina, with the country on each side, and the downs beyond.

Barton Farm may be viewed on the return to Cowes. Here was formerly a small Augustine convent, or oratory, some traces of which are yet visible. There is nothing in the history of this monastic house, or in the appearance of the existing structure, to demand minute attention.

CHAPTER IV.

NEWPORT, AND THE INTERIOR.

NEWPORT stands nearly in the centre of the island as regards its eastern and western extremities, and is not far from the same relative position as to north and south. It is situated in a pleasing valley, the hills surrounding which add greatly to the beauty of its home scenery; and its general appearance is that of a neat, cleanly, and cheerful market-

town. It is the capital of the Isle of Wight; has a population, according to the return made in 1831, of 4318 persons; and has been incorporated since the commencement of the reign of James I. The existing corporation, however, was constituted by Charles II., and consists of a Mayor, Recorder, ten Aldermen, and twelve Burgesses. As previously mentioned, it is the only town in the Island, which, by the Reform Act, is allowed to retain its privilege of sending members to Parliament. As a place of trade, it is much aided by its central situation, and by the river Medina, which is navigable from hence to the harbour of Cowes. The agriculturist considers it as the principal mart for his produce; and its shops supply nearly the whole of the interior, and back of the island, with such articles as it is usual for the inhabitants of country places to visit a market-town to purchase.

Newport wears, generally, the air of a modern town; and perhaps its most ancient building, the church excepted, is the *Free Grammar School,* which was built by subscription in the year 1619. Even this erection, however, retains few of the peculiar features of its era; and is remarkable only as having been chosen for that conference between Charles I. and his Parliament, which historians designate "The Treaty of Newport." The apartment made memorable by this conference is fifty feet in length, and was at that time, as now, the school-room of the institution.

The *Church,* dedicated to St. Thomas à Becket, is supposed to have been founded in the year 1172, towards the close of the reign of Henry II.; and portions of the structure, yet remaining, give warranty to the supposition. But many have been the alterations of later years: in particular, the north and south aisles seem to have been restored, if not wholly rebuilt, in the Tudor times; and additions were also made in 1701, as is seen from a date on the south side. The interior is chiefly remarkable for a curiously carved oaken pulpit, which

bears date in 1636: the execution is very elaborate, displaying a series of figures in two rows of compartments, the uppermost of which are emblematic of the cardinal virtues, and the lower of various sciences, as rhetoric, astrology, music, geometry, &c. The pews, and altar-screen, also of oak, were erected in 1630. Just within the screen, is a small brass plate in the floor, inscribed: "*Underneath, in a lead Coffin, rest y^e^ Remains of Elizabeth, 2^d^ Daughter of King Charles 1^st^. Obiit Sept. 8th,* 1650: *Ætat.* 14." This inscription was placed soon after the discovery, in 1793, of the vault in which the princess was interred: the spot having been originally marked only by a stone, simply bearing the letters E. S. She died a prisoner in Carisbrooke Castle, about a year and a half after her father's execution. The coffin was inscribed thus:—

ELIZABETH,
SECOND DAUGHTER OF THE LATE KING CHARLES,
DECE'D SEPTEMBER 8TH. MDCL.

The most important sepulchral memorial in this church, the above mentioned excepted, is that to Sir Edward Horsey, Knt. who was Captain of the island in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and uncle to Sir Jerome Horsey, ambassador from that sovereign to the court of Petersburgh. His effigy, in alabaster, lies on the tomb, under a canopy. The family pedigree is traced from Sir Philip de Horsey, who lived in the time of Henry the First, to the only child and heiress of the late Samuel Horsey, Esq. whose son, Spencer H. de Horsey, Esq., bears the name and arms of "De Horsey," by virtue of a warrant from his Majesty William IV.

The other places of public worship in Newport, are a *Roman-Catholic*, a *Unitarian*, a *Baptist*, a *Methodist*, and two *Independent* Chapels. Neither of these possess any architectural or other features requiring particular notice.

The *Market-house* and *Town-hall* make together a building of important appearance, as will be evident from our plate. The basement is opened on two sides by arches, surmounted by Ionic columns, which support a pediment in front: the columns only are of stone, the remainder being stuccoed. The cost of this erection was £10,000: it was commenced in the year 1814, and completed two years afterwards. The design was given to the town by John Nash, Esq. It deserves the praise of internal convenience of arrangement, rather than that of elegant external effect. The council-chamber, and magistrates' room, are the principal apartments: besides which, there are rooms appropriated to the Town-Clerk, the Petty Jury, the meetings of the Free-Masons, &c. Here are held the borough quarter-sessions; and the magistrates meet weekly, on Saturdays, for the settlement of less important cases. A relic of the feudal times also exists here, in what is styled the Knights' Court, (*Curia Militum*) in which the governor's deputy, called his steward, presides: it has jurisdiction, under the value of forty shillings, over the whole island, the borough itself excepted. The institutor of this ancient court is said to have been William Fitz-Osborne, the first lord of Wight; and the judges, who decide without the intervention of a jury, are all who hold a knight's fee from the lord.

The greatest architectural ornament to Newport, as well as that which does most honour to the taste of Mr. Nash, is the *Isle of Wight Institution*, an edifice erected by subscription, at the cost of £3000, in the year 1811. This institution is supported, as it deserves to be, by nearly every person of consideration in the island. Its chief features are, a very good library; a reading-room, supplied with newspapers and periodical publications; and a museum. The annual subscription of the members is two guineas each. This building presents a very handsome front, of Swanage stone, to St. James's Square.

Newport has also its *Mechanics' Institution*, with other

societies for the spread of literature and knowledge; and, besides the Grammar-School, already mentioned, a *Free-School*, established in 1761, for the education of girls; and a *National-School*, commenced in 1816, for the instruction of poor children of both sexes.

Two buildings, of very opposite character, the *Theatre* and the *Gaol*, are to be found in Holyrood-Street. The former, though small, is both neat and convenient: the latter is nothing more than an old house, adapted, with little shew of art, to its present purpose.

The principal hotels and inns are, the *Bugle*, the *Green Dragon*, (where are held the assemblies), the *Star*, and the *Wheatsheaf*. From the first-mentioned, which is in the High Street, *Coaches* proceed to Ryde and Cowes, and return, at stated hours, daily. These conveyances are well conducted, and the roads they travel afford much variety of pleasing scenery. *Stapler's Heath*, on the way to Ryde, presents a noble panoramic view; and by the same route, the traveller will obtain a sight of that delightful little village, before described, called Wootton-Bridge. *Fairlee*, a handsome seat, the property of John White, Esq., is passed on the road to East Cowes; and *Saint Cross*, formerly a priory, now the residence of Joseph Kirkpatrick, Esq., on that to West Cowes.

Other objects of interest, contiguous to the town, occurring on the road to West Cowes, are the *House of Industry*, and the *Albany Barracks*. The first mentioned is the poor-house for the whole island, and was erected pursuant to an Act of Parliament obtained in 1770. It has all the requisite accommodations for one thousand persons; and, what is of the first importance, its inmates are properly employed. Doubtless, this institution, among its other beneficial effects, has contributed much to that general absence of the beggar and the vagrant, which the stranger in the Isle of Wight cannot fail to observe. Happy were it for almost innumerable other

places in the kingdom, if their provisions for the poor could be made to appear equally effective!

The Albany Barracks formerly took name from their situation on part of the extensive tract of waste land called ***Parkhurst Forest***; their present designation was a compliment to the late Duke of York and Albany, when commander-in-chief of the British forces. These erections were commenced towards the close of the year 1798: they occupy, together with the hospital, an area of about 100 acres, and are complete in every military accommodation. Their importance is of course greatly diminished since the termination of the war; and, for several years past, they have been little occupied.

In describing the INTERIOR of the island, we shall take in detail the various places, within seven or eight miles from Newport, to which there are roads west, south, and east; those to the north having been already mentioned. Pursuing this plan, we shall in the first instance proceed westward to

CARISBROOKE.

A charming walk along the ***Mall*** (so is the favorite promenade of the Newportonians denominated) conducts to this picturesquely situated village, which is not more than a mile and a half distant. Our view exhibits all the more prominent features of this once important place, with the majestic ruins of the *Castle* on the one hand, the valley beneath, and the village itself, with its fine old church, on the opposite eminence. Anciently, no doubt, Carisbrooke was the capital of the Island; its castle having been the residence, and seat of government, of the lords and captains of former times. Its name has been derived by some from Whitgara-burgh, the town or city of Whitgara, or Whitgar, a Saxon chief: but we prefer a more simple etymological deduction from ***Caer***, the British for a stronghold, and ***brook***, referring to the stream which flows through the valley. The latter derivation would also lead us to a

period of antiquity more remote than the Saxon times; and, in truth, all the natural features of the elevation upon which the Castle stands, are such as we may well suppose to have been selected by the Britons for the ease with which they might be adapted to the purposes of a hill-fortress. We are by no means converts, however, to the opinion, that any portion of the existing Castle can be ascribed to a more distant era than that of Norman military architecture: even our friend the "Guide" failed to convince us that the very keep was Saxon; though we have little doubt that its site once bore a Saxon tower, as erewhile it had been graced by the British earthwork, whose defences were completed by a ditch and palisade.

Carisbrooke Castle, though less perfect than many similar remains of antiquity, is one of the most picturesque and interesting now extant. It is probable that the oldest parts, the keep included, were erected by William Fitz-Osborne, the first lord, and his immediate successors. Considerable additions were made in the reign of Henry I.; and, in that of Edward IV., the grand gate, flanked by round towers, was built by Lord Woodville, whose arms are yet to be descried upon it. The smaller external gate was added by Queen Elizabeth, as appears by her initials, and the date 1598. The oblique view obtained of these gates, and the mouldering walls, on approaching by the carriage-road, surpasses in picturesque and impressive effect any delineation of them by the pencil that we have been so fortunate as to witness. With exception of the last-mentioned gate, Queen Elizabeth's additions appear to have been confined to the outer wall, which she enlarged so as to comprehend an area of twenty acres, and to the domestic buildings, none of which seem older than her time. Among these latter are shown part of the chamber in which Charles I. was confined, with the window through which he vainly attempted to escape. The most modern building of the whole is the Chapel of St. Nicholas, rebuilt, on the site of a more

ancient edifice, by George II. in 1738. In this chapel the Mayor of Newport, and the High Constables, are still sworn into office, either by the governor of the island or his deputy.

There is a well in the castle-yard, 300 feet deep, the construction of which is with great probability ascribed to the Romans, who are known to have gained possession of the island in the reign of the emperor Claudius. Water is hence obtained by means of a large wheel, within which an ass treads, and by his steps communicates to it the power of a windlass. An exhibition of the animal's performance is made by the guide; who also amuses the spectator with the descent of a lighted lamp, which, floating upon the water, gives a forcible idea of the depth from the summit to the surface. Having thus viewed "the lions" of the place, the visitor will do well to close his inspection by a tour of the exterior walls, which, though a good mile's walk, will repay his trouble by the extent and variety of the prospects. From the side next the village he will not fail to notice the *Vicarage-House*, the residence of the Rev. Joseph Maude: it stands conspicuously on the rise of the elevation from the opposite side of the valley, and, though perfectly unpretending, charms every observer by its air of taste enhancing all the natural beauties of a delightful rural abode.

The *Church* of Carisbrooke is said to have been founded in the year 1064, a date from which it would acquire a Saxon origin. There is nothing improbable in this account, though the structure exhibits no Saxon remains in support of its correctness. The Norman conquerors were seldom satisfied with the ecclesiastical structures they found erected on their arrival; and, in most cases, either rebuilt them from the ground, or so enlarged and improved them, that the lapse of a century probably rendered it difficult to detect the workmanship of the Saxon founders. In the present instance, as in many others, though portions of plain walls, it is possible, may even yet be

standing which were reared by Saxon hands, there is certainly not a door, a window, or an ornament, that can bear date earlier than the Norman period. The tower, (the noblest in the Island), would clearly appear not to have been built till after the Conquest; though, in all likelihood, it was an early instance of the magnificence of the feudal lords resident in the adjacent castle. The church, it seems, has lost its chancel, and a side-aisle that was appended to it; and one of these, perhaps, constituted the original *Saxon* edifice! From age, or for some other reason, it was thought necessary to remove those parts of the building in the reign of Henry VIII.; and the windows which were then inserted at the eastern terminations of the present body and aisle, are evidence, from their form, of the truth of the tradition which ascribes the change to that period. In the interior there is nothing more remarkable than the pulpit, on which appears the date 1658. The only monument of any consequence is one to the memory of the lady of Sir W. Wadham, captain of the island in the time of Henry VII.

Contiguous to the sacred edifice are some ruins of a *Priory*, of the Cistertian order, founded by William Fitz-Osborne in 1071. The churches of Arreton, Whippingham, Newchurch, Godshill, Niton, and Freshwater, were made dependencies upon this Priory; and the whole, together with that of Carisbrooke, were bestowed by Fitz-Osborne upon the abbey of Lyra, in Normandy, which he had previously founded. Strictly speaking, the churches of Newport and Northwood are at this time only chapels of ease to Carisbrooke.

Taking the Calbourne road from this place, we reach *Swainston*, after proceeding about three miles. This delightful residence, formerly the seat of Sir Fitz-William Barrington, is now the property of Sir Richard Simeon, Bart. From a hill, as we approach, the grounds present a burst of the most luxuriant wooded scenery, the effect of which is greatly contributed

to by the romantic swells and declivities of the surface.' The house is large and handsome: it occupies the site of an ancient palace of the Bishops of Winchester; and there are yet some remains of the chapel attached to it in former times. These are now converted into offices.

CALBOURNE is a small village, affording nothing more remarkable than its *Church*; an edifice which, in all its principal features, gives a specimen of the style of ecclesiastical building not later than the reigns of Henry III. or Edward I. The windows, with exception of one on the north side, at a part of the structure which has been modernised, are all of the small lancet kind, in width barely 17 inches: and at the east end is an example of one of the earliest steps towards the progressive enlargement of windows, by the introduction of the quatrefoil between the heads of two lancets. The tower, which stands at the south-west angle, is of the period at which ideas of defence were still so intimately connected with all erections of its kind, that *no* windows, properly speaking, were permitted in it, the only openings being slits of a very small size. The porch, on the north side, is built against, and so as partly to conceal, a Norman doorway bearing the chevron ornament.

Contiguous to the village stands *Westover*, the seat of Lady Holmes. The house, though occupying a gentle eminence, is most umbrageously secluded to the east and north, especially the latter. On the east side the trees are not so near as to create gloom, but, being disposed in the valley of a small stream, and ranging along the opposite upland, have a very rich and picturesque effect. The south front has a Doric colonnade in the centre, with verandahs above and on each side of it. It overlooks a beautiful intermixture of undulating lawn and parterres, and towards a near range of downs, which bound the view.

A cross-road will conduct from Calbourne to Shalfleet and Newtown, both of which may be here described.

SHALFLEET presents another curious instance of an ancient *Church*, though one of later date than that last mentioned. At least we may admit this conclusion from the size and form of the windows, which shew a nearer approach to the large opening of several lights, wherein the circle, quatrefoil, or other figures at top, become incorporated with two or more lancets. Here is also a remarkable Norman doorway, with a sculptured impost, or lintel, filling up the head of the arch. The sculpture is very rude: it has been said to represent a bishop, whose arms are extended, and the hands resting on animals resembling the griffin. The tower has been termed Saxon, but is doubtless of Norman workmanship: its proportions are monstrous, being of greater width than the body of the church at its west end, though but little higher than the same part of the structure. It has the very unusual decoration of a fascia, containing a Norman ornament, running round it.

NEWTOWN perhaps took name from having been such in comparison with Carisbrooke, to whose importance it succeeded: in its turn it has given way to *New-port*, and become much inferior to Carisbrooke itself. Or it might have first acquired its present appellation when rebuilt after a destructive visit of the French in 1377, as it is on record that until that period it was commonly called Francheville. Though at this time comprising only fourteen cottages, with a population (according to the return of 1831) of sixty-eight persons, it is still a corporate town, governed by a mayor and burgesses, and, until the passing of the Reform Act, sent two members to Parliament! The small *Town-hall* is one relic of its former consequence, and the ruins of a *Church* constitute another. An umbrageous lane, commencing opposite the village alehouse dignified by the sign of the "Newtown Arms," leads to the last-mentioned picturesque remain, which consists of part of the north side, and of the east and west ends, of the ancient building; the whole so shrouded with ivy, that a

few pointed niches, of small dimensions, are almost the only details that can be made out. Grass and nettles grow luxuriantly within, as without, the building: and the cemetery can now be distinguished only by a few mouldering tomb-stones. This church was a dependency upon that of Calbourne, and its glebe still accrues to the rector of that parish.

An arm of the sea, of very irregular form, extends from the Solent to Newtown, and constitutes its capacious harbour, which will admit vessels of 500 tons burthen. The only trade now connected with the place, is derived from its salterns. Formerly it had a market, under a charter granted by Edward II., and an annual fair of three days' duration. The first charter was given by Aylmer, Bishop of Winchester, lord of the borough, and is dated from Swainston: this was afterwards confirmed by the crown.

Another road from Carisbrooke leads to Shorwell, four miles distant. Looking back, the fine old tower of Carisbrooke church is seen to great advantage, through a vista of noble trees, at a short distance from the village. Nothing further of interest occurs until we reach

SHORWELL, a very pleasing spot, affording one other of those examples, so common in the Isle of Wight, of rustic life embellished by the charm arising from neatness in the cottages, and the sight of flowers and evergreens ornamenting their fronts and little gardens. The *Church* of this village is rather large, having a body, chancel, and two aisles: its most remarkable features are the inner doorway of the south porch, which is of the Norman form, decorated with the nail-head and chevron ornaments; and a window of two lights, square-headed, surmounted by a label, bearing, in raised stone figures, the date 1523.

Northcourt, the property of Mrs. Bennett, once the pride of Shorwell, is now piteously neglected, as to its grounds and their embellishments at least. These latter consisted of a

very pretty "Dairy;" a picturesque "Mausoleum," in memory of a beloved daughter of Richard Bull, Esq. a former owner; an "Alpine Bridge," crossing the high road at a considerable height; and "The Temple of the Sun," which, however, notwithstanding its sounding name, was never more than a rustic summer-house, crowning a very steep ascent, and, from its elevation, commanding a very wide and delightful prospect. The towering groves, and other native beauties of the spot, are of course irremovable, except by the hand of violence: and the same may be said of the succession of terraces, cut, it is probable, by the original proprietor, in the fine swell of the domain that adjoins the mansion at its south end. The mansion itself, as regards the greater part of its east or principal front, is a good specimen of the domestic architecture that characterised the age of James I. Over a porch, in the centre, is a shield of arms, and the date 1619. The projecting portion of this front, however, and the whole of that on the north side, are later additions to the original design.

The pleasant village of Brixton (by the natives called Brison) lies two miles farther on the same road. From hence we again obtain a sight of the broad English Channel; but may delay our observations of the coast, which is about a mile distant, until we visit it in connexion with the "Back of the Island." The *Church* of this village is not distinguished by any peculiarity worthy remark.

Kingston, the smallest parish in the Isle of Wight, adjoins that of Shorwell on the south-east. Its little *Church* occupies a pretty eminence, shaded by elm-trees, and commanding a good interior view. The general features of this part of the Island, it may be here noticed, are *not* striking: the fineness of the crops is the particular most likely to attract the traveller's attention, there being but few trees, and the principal diversity in the scenery being created by the range of downs to the north. To the shelter afforded by these downs, as well

as to the natural fertility of the soil, is to be ascribed the exuberant produce just spoken of. These remarks will apply, in a greater or less degree, to the whole extent of country, south of the downs, from Freshwater to St. Catherine's Hill.

Again reverting to Newport as a centre, we may make a pleasing excursion from thence through Godshill to Appuldurcombe, the whole distance being but seven miles.

Gatcombe Park, the seat of Alexander Campbell, Esq. is shortly observed on the right. The house, a large square mansion erected about sixty years since, stands about three miles south-west of Newport, and is most agreeably situated in regard to its inland views, which are not to be exceeded in the Island. Woods, lawns, eminences, and valleys, combine to give the utmost richness and diversity to the scenery around Gatcombe. Contiguous is the small village *Church*, also "wood-embosomed," and the *Rectory* rises on the opposite shore of a little lake, The village itself offers a charming picture of rural retirement.

Pidford meets the eye on the left. This house also is very pleasantly situated: it is the residence of the Rev. Mr. Bowerman.

Godshill is a picturesque village, much remarked for the bold position of its *Church*, which, standing on a very abrupt hill, surrounded by the cottages of the inhabitants, may be supposed to have given name to the place, from its erection on so commanding a site. Rustic tradition, indeed, tells that a more lowly spot was at first selected; but that the materials employed for that purpose by day, being regularly removed, by invisible agents, to the summit of the hill during the night, the workmen at length wisely determined to save themselves further unnecessary trouble, and built the church where some supernatural authority so plainly intimated that it must be erected! The edifice, about which so extraordinary a story is told, is a highly respectable example of a village church: it is

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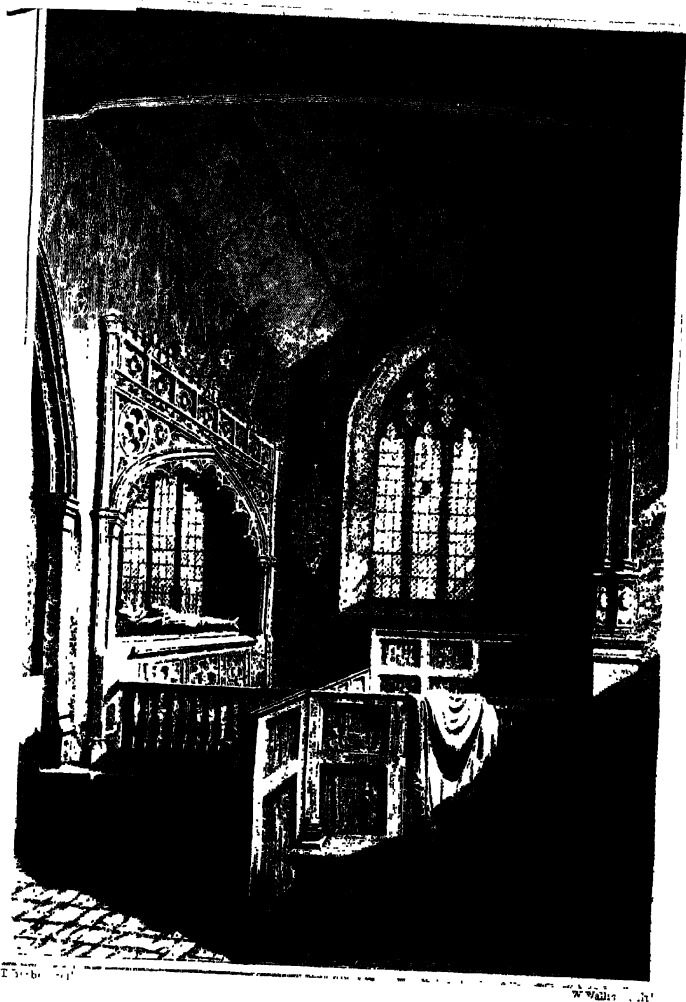
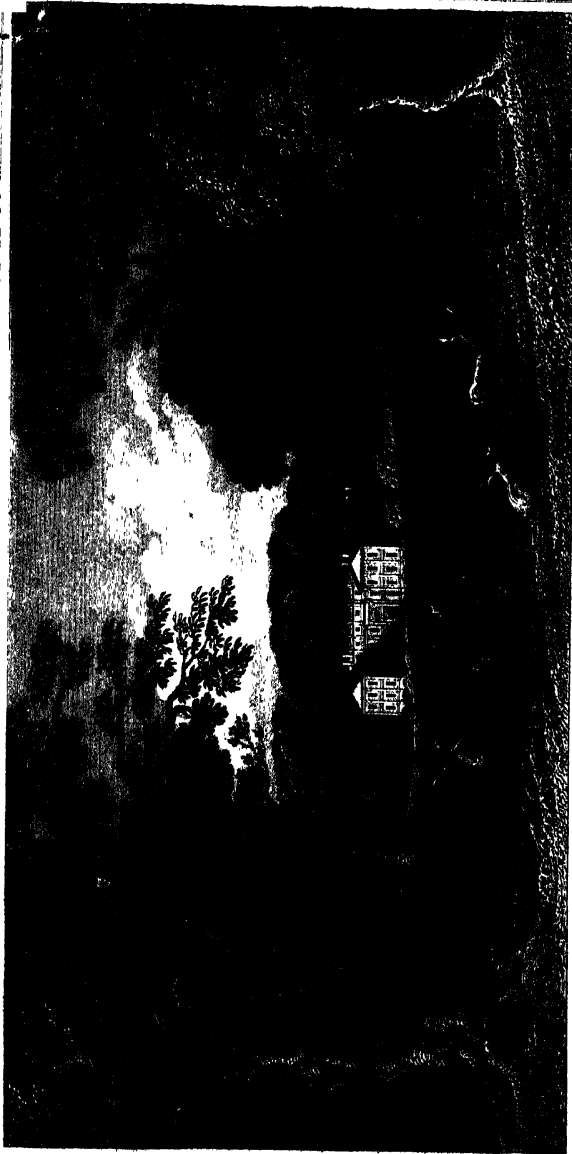

INTERIOR OF

GODSHILL CHURCH.

London, Published by Simpkin & Marshall Stationers Court

APPULDURCOMBE PK LORD YARBOROUGH'S.

large, and appears to have been almost wholly reared since the adoption of ramified windows, and other elaborate ornaments, in Gothic architecture: that it had a predecessor of much more remote date, cannot however be doubted, since the parish stands upon record from the time of the Conqueror, and its original church was one of those given by Fitz-Osborne to his abbey of Lyra. The elevated situation of this structure seems to have exposed it to considerable danger in January, 1778, when it was struck by lightning, which did so much injury that some portions of it fell in the following year. In the interior are several monuments, worth inspection, for members of the Worsley family, long possessors of the neighbouring seat at Appuldurcombe. There is a *Grammar-School* in the village, which was founded and endowed by Sir Richard Worsley in 1614

The noble mansion and domain styled APPULDURCOMBE, well merit a more detailed account than the compass of this work will allow. They are now the property of the Right Hon Lord Yarborough. The visitor of the Island may reckon his time not wholly mispent, if he has only seen Appuldurcombe but he must remember that to do this, it is necessary first to obtain a ticket, or written order, from Thomas Sewell, Esq of Newport. The spacious park is approached, from Godshill, by a handsome Ionic gateway: having passed which, the noble swells and magnificent foliage of the grounds, arrest the attention before it is fixed by the mansion itself. The latter has four regular fronts, of the Corinthian order, built of free-stone; and the pilasters, cornices, balustrades, and other ornamental parts, of Portland stone. The grand entrance is in the east front. In rear rises one of the lofty downs, from which the park is partly formed; its summit crowned by an obelisk of Cornish granite, nearly 70 feet high, which was erected in memory of Sir Richard Worsley. By these downs the view is encircled on two sides, but the magnitude of their

forms, and the size of the trees dispersed through an area so extensive, render that circumstance an addition rather than otherwise, to the general effect. The late Rev. W. Gilpin well observed of this seat: "Here every thing is uniformly grand: the house is magnificent, and it is magnificently furnished. The grounds too are laid out in a style of greatness equal to the mansion." We cannot but think, however, that Mr. Gilpin would have excepted from this praise the irregular-shaped little parterres in the lawn in front, had they existed at the time he wrote: they are appropriate neither to the grand character of the house, nor to the large features of the surrounding scenery.

The principal entrance is by a hall, 54 feet in length, by 24 in breadth, adorned by eight beautiful columns of the Ionic order, made to resemble porphyry. "Upon opening the doors of this hall," said Mr. Wyndham, in his account of the Island, "it disclosed such a variety of beauties as made us forget all criticism. Whichever way we turned our eyes, the most precious pieces of ancient sculpture, and paintings of the Roman and Venetian schools, claimed our attention. The other rooms on this floor are also superbly furnished, and decorated with some fine pictures, and many excellent drawings of the cities, countries, and ruins of the East. It is a singular circumstance, that, in so large a collection of antiques, brought by Sir Richard Worsley from Egypt, Turkey, and Italy, nothing spurious, or like the refuse of other collections, should appear; but that the minutest pieces should deserve some degree of attention." These remarks do no more than justice to their subject: and it may be added, that many of the paintings possess a high degree of *historical* interest, being original portraits of no less personages than Queens Mary and Elizabeth, Henry VIII., his infant son Edward VI., &c. The two last-mentioned are by Holbein: and it is recorded in the MS. catalogue lying in the rooms, that the majority of these portraits were presents

from the sovereigns they represent, to the then proprietors of Appuldurcombe.

The erection of this noble seat was commenced by Sir Robert Worsley in 1710, and finished by his successor, Sir Richard Worsley, who made considerable improvements upon his father's plan. The original house stood at a slight distance from the spot occupied by the present one: it had been founded, after the dissolution of the monasteries, upon the site of a small priory, or rather cell, of Benedictine monks, which was at first a dependancy upon the abbey of St. Mary de Montsbury, in Normandy, but was afterwards given to the abbess and nuns of St. Clare, without Aldgate, London. A prior, and two monks, resided here. There is a view of the old mansion in Worsley's History, the accuracy of which is attested by the signature, "Robert Worsley, 1720." Speaking of Appuldurcombe generally, Sir Robert says: "This place took its name from its situation; for, in the old Armoric language, ***Pul*** is a bottom, or a ditch, or a pool, and ***Dur*** is water. The Armoric language is that of the Bretons in France, and agrees much with the Cornish: it was probably the language of the old inhabitants of this island. The Saxons added *Combe*, which in their language signifies a bottom. I thought fit to leave this memorandum to posterity, and refer them to Lhuyd's Dictionary. In the oldest court-roll I have, which was the sixteenth year of King Henry VI., I find it entered *Appuldurcombe*, as above, and likewise in some of the old ones since; but they often varied in the spelling of it, not knowing from whence it was derived." Sir Robert Worsley, it should here be observed, made considerable collections for that History of the Isle of Wight, which was ultimately compiled, and given to the public, by his son, Sir Richard. To the last-mentioned, who was born at Appuldurcombe, the island is indebted alike for the completion of the literary undertaking, and of the family seat. He also formed

the fine collection of paintings and antiques for which the house is celebrated; having for that purpose freighted a ship, and engaged artists of talent to accompany him in his travels through Italy, Spain, Greece, Egypt, Asia Minor, and Tartary. Afterwards appeared the "Museum Worsleianum," a work in two very handsome volumes, printed at his expense, and containing descriptions, in English and Italian, of the products of his researches, together with engravings. After filling the offices of Colonel of the South Hants Militia, Member of Parliament for Newport, Governor of the Island, and Comptroller of his Majesty's household, this gentleman died at his birth-place, in the year 1805. His sister and heiress married John Bridgeman Simpson, Esq. Member of Parliament for Wenlock, Staffordshire; and the present noble occupant having married their daughter, Henrietta, became by that means the possessor of Appuldurcombe.

Whitwell, a small village, lies a little south of Appuldurcombe. It is in reality only a chapelry to Godshill, but is commonly accounted a parish, by reason of its distinct rates. Its *Church* is formed from two ancient chapels, dedicated respectively to our Lady of Whitwell, and to St. Radegund; the last-mentioned being at this time the chancel. De Estur, one of the lords of Gatcombe, was the founder of this edifice.

On leaving Newport we shortly reached the pretty hamlet of *Shide*, and thence proceeded nearly due south towards Godshill. Had we adopted the eastern road, it would have conducted us to Arreton, which village, together with Newchurch, and the objects in their vicinity, we will now describe.

The distance from Newport to Arreton is three miles. The village itself straggles along the sides of the road for about two miles, and consists almost entirely of the habitations of the cultivators of the soil, the most fertile, perhaps, in the Isle of Wight. South of the road stands an object of much interest with many visitants; namely, the *Cottage* of "The

Dairyman," whose "Daughter" has become of such celebrity, through the record of her character and death given by the Rev. Legh Richmond. That gentleman's descriptions of the localities of his different tales, are very faithful to the scenes they describe. Speaking of his ride "to see the family at their own home," he says: "As I approached the village where the good old Dairyman dwelt, I observed him in a little field, driving his cows before him toward a yard and hovel which adjoined his cottage. I dismounted, and was conducted through a neat little garden, part of which was shaded by two large overspreading elm trees, to the house.—The little room had two windows: a lovely prospect of hills, woods, and fields, appeared through one; the other was more than half obscured by the branches of a vine which was trained across it; between its leaves the sun shone, and cast a cheerful light over the whole place. 'This,' thought I, 'is a fit residence for piety, peace, and contentment.'"

The reverend author's mention of the *Church*, and of the country he passed through on visiting it for the purpose of solemnising the funeral rites of "Elizabeth," runs thus. "As I travelled onward,—the first sound of a tolling bell struck my ear. It proceeded from a village church in the valley directly beneath the ridge of a high hill, over which I had taken my way. It was Elizabeth's funeral knell! The scenery was in unison with that tranquil frame of mind which is most suitable for holy meditation. A rich and fruitful valley (that of *Arreton* and *Newchurch*) lay immediately beneath: it was adorned with corn-fields and pastures, through which a small river winded in a variety of directions, and many herds grazed upon its banks. A fine range of opposite hills, covered with grazing flocks, terminated with a bold sweep into the ocean, whose blue waves appeared at a distance beyond. Several villages, hamlets, and churches, were scattered in the valley. The noble mansions of the rich, and the lowly

cottages of the poor, added their respective features to the landscape. The air was mild, and the declining sun occasioned a beautiful interchange of light and shade upon the sides of the hills.

"The procession formed.—We at length arrived at the Church. Looking upwards as I drew near the porch, I observed a dial on the wall. The sun's declining rays directed the shadow to the evening hour. As I passed underneath this simple but solemn monitor, I was reminded of the lapse of time, the uncertainty of life, and the sure approach of eternity."

The "dial" spoken of is over the porch-door, which leads, from the south side, into the body of the edifice. The church is old, and has a heavy embattled tower at its west end. Within is a handsome monument for the late Sir L. W. Holmes, Bart. A stone in the more common cemetery, north of the church, is inscribed with *Elizabeth's* memorial, as follows:—

To the Memory of
ELIZABETH WALLBRIDGE,
The Dairyman's Daughter,
Who died May 30, 1801, aged 31 years.

"She, being dead, yet speaketh."

Stranger! if e'er by chance or feeling led,
Upon this hallowed turf thy footsteps tread,
Turn from the contemplation of the sod,
And think on her whose spirit rests with God.
Lowly her lot on earth—but He, who bore
Tidings of grace and blessings to the poor,
Gave her, his truth and faithfulness to prove,
The choicest treasures of His boundless love,—
(Faith, that dispell'd affliction's darkest gloom;
Hope, that could cheer the passage to the tomb;
Peace, that not hell's dark legions could destroy;
And Love, that fill'd the soul with heavenly joy.)

Death of its sting disarm'd, she knew no fear,
But tasted heaven e'en while she lingered here.
O, happy saint!—may we, like thee, be blest—
In life be faithful, and in death find rest!

The view of Arreton vale, and village, from the *Down* of the same name, is one which no traveller can contemplate without delight. It also comprehends more distant scenes of beauty: and the down itself is made an object of interest to the antiquary by two barrows of large size, as well as by the discovery of several pieces of Roman armour which took place here some years since. *Stickworth*, the secluded seat of Robert Bell, Esq. is contiguous to the village.

NEWCHURCH, it has been remarked, is the parish church to which the chapelry of Ryde is attached. It is an antique structure, built in the form of a cross. Its site is commanding, and the prospect from the cemetery beautiful. The only sepulchral memorials of any consequence are those, within the edifice, to various members of the ancient manorial family of Dillington.

CHAPTER V.

THE BACK OF THE ISLAND,

FROM SHANKLIN TO THE NEEDLES POINT.

THE "Back of the Island," geographically speaking, comprehends that whole extent of rocky coast, which stretches from the *Foreland* of the peninsula of Bembridge, east, to the *Needles*, west. But we commence our route with Shanklin, both because the principal objects between that village and the Foreland have already come under mention, and because all the more romantic features of this most singular and surprising coast lie westward of the same spot.

We recommend all travellers, whose health and time will permit, to *walk* from Appuldurcombe to the village of SHANKLIN: the lovers of nature, in her combined beauty and grandeur, can enjoy few finer treats, should the weather prove propitious. Leaving the park attached to Lord Yarborough's noble seat, we enter a luxuriant copse, crowned by a precipitous height, and an artificial ruin, on the right hand, and commanding a succession of beautiful views to the left. As the prospect in the last-mentioned direction opens, it becomes truly magnificent, and comprehends, if we ascend the utmost elevation of Shanklin *Down*, not only at least one half of the Island, but the English Channel, the Solent, and the south coast of England to a vast extent. We must make a *détour* to gain the extreme elevation mentioned, which is nearly 800 feet above the level of the ocean; but even if content with the more moderate height afforded by the direct route, the

a fine view of Sandown Bay, and the ocean beyond.* Here are several lodging-houses, which the charming situation of the place renders much frequented in the summer months. The *Hotel*, with its cottage front, and parterres, and little pleasure-ground, resembles the rustic seat of a private gentleman, rather than a house of public character. The road separates these more artificial embellishments from its kitchen garden, whose steep side overhangs the stream that runs towards the celebrated *Chine*. Altogether, the spot is as sequestered and rural, as though it were placed many miles inland, instead of being in the immediate vicinity of the grandest coast scenery, and close to that very remarkable and even terrific fissure in the rocks just alluded to.

Before speaking of the principal attraction for the traveller at Shanklin, it may be proper to notice that any considerable chasm in the cliffs of the Island bears the provincial epithet of a *chine*. Sir Richard Worsley says: "the term is applied to the back-bone of an animal, both in the manège and culinary language, which forms the highest ridge of the body. *Echine*, in the French, is used in the same sense; and Boyer has the word *chinfreneau* for a great cut, or slash. Hence the word chine might be thought peculiarly expressive of a high ridge of land cleft abruptly down; and the several parts of the southern coast, denominated chines, all correspond with this description. A chine also appears to signify the same as a chasm, and both to be derived from the Greek word Χαινω, *hisco*, or *dehisco*; that is, to cleave asunder, so as to form a chasm, or chine. It is well known that the Χ in the Greek alphabet is always expressed in English by *ch*, and that it is pronounced by the modern Greeks as our *ch* in church, charity, &c. and perhaps it was so pronounced by the ancients." It may be added, that as all the chines have the accompaniment of a small stream, running through them from the summit of the cliffs down to the sea shore, it has been conjectured

that such water-courses were the primary cause of the formation of each. The idea is very probably correct: but it ought not to be therefore inferred, that a water-course alone could form such vast chasms as many of these chines are seen to be. Landslips, to a great extent, must have aided in the work; the soil, it is reasonable to suppose, having been prepared for such subsidences by the previous action of the stream.

The Chine at Shanklin is that best known, as it is certainly the most remarkable, of any in the island. Our views, taken, one from the beach, another from about half-way up the chasm, and a third looking down the chine towards the sea, will convey as correct general notions of it, perhaps, as can be given by the hand of the engraver; but, to form just ideas of the details, it is indispensable that the reader should see them for himself. Meanwhile, we think, he can scarcely fail to be interested by an extract from the Rev. Legh Richmond's account of his visit to this celebrated spot, as given in his "Young Cottager."

"In a widely sweeping curve of a beautiful bay,* there is a kind of chasm, or opening, in one of the lofty cliffs which bound it. This produces a very romantic and striking effect. The steep descending sides of this opening in the cliff are covered with trees, bushes, wild flowers, fern, wormwood, and many other herbs, here and there contrasted with bold masses of rock or brown earth. In the higher part of one of these declivities, two or three picturesque cottages are fixed, and seem half suspended in the air. From the upper extremity of this great fissure, or opening in the cliff, a small stream of water enters by a cascade, and flows through the bottom, winding in a varied course of about a quarter of a mile in length; and then runs into the sea, across a smooth expanse of firm hard sand, at the lower extremity of the chasm. At this point, the sides of the woody banks are very lofty, and,

* Sandown Bay.

to a spectator from the bottom, exhibit a mixture of the grand and beautiful not often exceeded.

"I walked up by a steep pathway, that winded through the trees and shrubs on the side of one of the precipices. At every step, the extent of prospect enlarged, and acquired a new and varying character by being seen through the trees on each side. Climbing up a kind of rude, inartificial set of stone stairs in the bank, I passed by the singularly-situated cottages which I had viewed from beneath, and arrived at the top of the precipice. From this point the abyss, occasioned by the great fissure in the cliff, appeared grand and interesting. Trees hung over it on each side, projecting not only their branches, but many of their roots in wild and fantastic forms. Masses of earth had recently fallen from the upper to the lower part of the precipice, carrying trees and plants down the steep descent The character of the soil, and the unceasing influence of the stream at bottom, seemed to threaten further slips of the land from the summit. From hence the gentle murmur of the cascade at the head of the chine, stole upon the ear without much interruption to the quietness of the scene. Every object combined to please the eye, and direct the traveller's heart to admire and love the Author and Creator of all that is beautiful to sense, and edifying to the soul."

The stream which finds its way to the sea through the chasm it has so greatly assisted in producing, rises in the down beyond Shanklin, and, as it approaches the village, may be tracked as it flows by the fine forest trees that line its banks. Its course, just before it reaches the head of the chine, is along a bed of stones, placed to prevent the further wear of the sand-rock, and thence over a broad flat stone, supported as a projecting ledge to increase the effect of the fall, the natural descent of which is about thirty feet. The half-way view, from which the cascade is seen on the one hand, and, behind and around, nothing but the precipitous winding sides of the

F. Barber del et sculp

HEAD OF

SHANKLIN CHINE.

London Published by Simpkin & Marshall Stationers Co.

abyss, is picturesque beyond description, especially if the sun aids the effect by throwing into alternate light and shade the projections and recesses on one side, while the other wholly sleeps in comparative gloom. Another striking effect, as noticed by Mr. Richmond, is that produced by the mouth of the chasm, when the spectator stands facing it on the shore. Here the cliffs are about 280 feet high, and the width of the opening at top is at least 300 feet. The desolate and barren aspect of the rocks on the left offers a fine contrast to that of their opposite neighbours, whose steeps are clothed with wood, and broken by cottages and gardens, the latter well stocked with vegetables and fruit-trees, One of these cottages is the "Chine Inn." At the foot of the cliff is the habitation of a fisherman. to whom visitors are indebted for the path cut along the arid rock to the summit of the chine, and who expects a small gratuity from those who ascend the chasm by means of the accommodation he has provided.

After sufficiently contemplating this scene, the spectator has only to reverse his position in order to enjoy a beautiful coast view, comprehending the entire extent of Sandown Bay, whose extreme points are, on the right, the elevated promontory called the Horse Lodge, and the more distant Culver Cliffs on the left. Every circumstance adds to the pleasure produced by this prospect. At our feet the little rivulet, gently rippling over pebbles, is soon lost in the waters of the mighty ocean. The murmuring of the waves, as the tide ebbs or flows on the sand; their dashing against the more distant rocks, fantastically covered with sea-weed and shells; the sea-birds floating in the air aloft, or occasionally screaming from their holes in the cliffs; the hum of human voices in the ships and boats, borne along the water; all these (as Mr. Richmond appositely remarked) serve to promote, rather than interrupt meditation. They are soothingly blended together, and enter the ear in a kind of natural harmony.

The carriage road from Shanklin to Bonchurch ascends windingly the promontory of *Dunnose,* and thence commands a prospect of great beauty, though exceeded in extent by that already noticed from the summit of Shanklin Down. Nearly every step of this road presents views, which, for varied and picturesque effect, are scarcely to be surpassed. Yet the pedestrian, perhaps, will derive equal, if not superior satisfaction from the *foot-path* to Bonchurch, which does not exceed three miles in length, and lies partly through the fields, and partly along one of the most singular and striking coasts imaginable. By this route, too, we are conducted direct to Luccombe Chine, which otherwise the traveller must leave his carriage, and descend a winding path, in order to inspect.

LUCCOMBE lies under that lofty side of *Wroxall Down* which fronts the ocean. Its *Chine,* to be duly appreciated, should be visited before that of Shanklin, to which it is decidedly inferior, though possessing a character of its own which well entitles it to attention. "If," as is observed by a contemporary tourist, "it has not the magnificence of Shanklin Chine, it is not wanting in beauty: its dark brown cliff, with patches of green and hanging wood; its lofty trees, which shade and adorn the deep ravine; its rushing water, murmuring and falling to a fine shore, with the little cottages adjacent, give it a most picturesque appearance."

We now enter upon the peculiar scenery of the UNDERCLIFF, that far and justly-famed tract, for the due observation of which, at its eastern opening, the *walk* we have chosen affords every facility. This tract is commonly said to commence at East End; but having arrived at that spot, it is plainly seen that the beginning of the landslips which have occasioned all the remarkable features of this extraordinary coast, is from a point on the farther side of Luccombe Cove. From that point, the magnificent operations of Nature, producing those remarkable features, extend to Black-gang Chine,

a distance of from six to seven miles in length, by from a quarter of a mile to a mile and a half in breadth. Such miles are hardly to be paralleled! This singular district, as Dr. Clark (in his "Influence of Climate") accurately observed, consists of a series of terraces, formed by fragments of rock, chalk, and sandstone, which have been detached from the cliffs and hills above, and deposited upon a substratum of blue marl. The whole Undercliff is completely sheltered from the north, north-east, north-west, and west winds, by the range of lofty downs, or hills of chalk and sandstone, which rise boldly from the upper termination of these terraces, in elevations varying from four to six and seven hundred feet in height. Indeed, the two extremities of the range are yet higher; as St. Boniface Down, on the east, is 800 feet above the level of the sea, and St. Catherine's Hill, on the west, nearly 900. The protection afforded by this mountain barrier, is greatly increased by the very singular and striking abruptness with which it terminates on its southern aspect. This, in many places, consists of the bare perpendicular rock of sandstone; in others of chalk, assuming its characteristic rounded form, covered with fine turf and underwood: but almost everywhere the southern face of the hill is so steep, as to justify the appellation of the beautiful tract which extends from its base to the sea-shore. Yet, though low in position, as compared with its northern boundary, the Undercliff is still very considerably elevated above the sea level, as its southern limit terminates, on the margin of the waters, in a perpendicular cliff of from sixty to one hundred feet in height along its whole extent. The Undercliff may therefore be represented as a long natural terrace, of lofty but unequal elevation, backed by a mountainous wall on the north, and open on the south to the full influence of the sun, from his rising to his going down, in that season at least when his influence is most wanted in our climate.

From the singular position described, it only naturally results, that the change of temperature experienced in descending from the exposure of the open and elevated downs to the shelter of the Undercliff, is most complete; though sometimes, to those who do not consider its causes, not a little surprising. It reminds the Italian traveller of his sensations on entering the valley of Domo d'Ossola, after quitting the chilly defiles of the Simplon. He feels at once that he has entered a new climate; and the luxuriance of the vegetable tribes around him, proves that the impression made on his senses is not deceitful. Indeed, even during the colder months of the year, the myrtle, geranium, and other exotic plants, here flourish in the open air; and that too in seasons when the severity of the frost will destroy green-house plants on the north side of the island, though placed in sheltered apartments. Lieutenant-colonel Hewett, a close and accurate observer, who resided for two years at St. Boniface, found the mean temperature of the Undercliff, at 8 A. M., during the months of December, January, and February, of the winters of 1827-8 and 1828-9, to be 44° 5′; while that of Gosport, one of the warmest spots on the south coast, was 42° 5′, and that of Chichester only 41°: and that during the first three months of 1828, the mean temperature here, at 8 A. M., was 45° 4′, while that of Gosport was 43° 7′, of Chichester 42° 5′, and of London 41° 5′. From these observations, Dr. Clark deduces the important inference, that the climate of the Undercliff is one of the warmest in England, if not the very warmest. "I have certainly seen nothing along the south coast," he adds, "that will bear a comparison with it; and Torquay is, I apprehend, the only place on the south-west coast which will do so." But, "with a temperature nearly the same, the climate of Torquay will be found softer, more humid, and relaxing; while that of the Undercliff will prove drier, somewhat sharper, and more bracing." Elsewhere he remarks: "indeed, it is matter of

surprise to me, after having fully examined this favoured spot, that the advantages it possesses in so eminent a degree, in point of shelter and exposition, should have been so long overlooked in a country like this, whose inhabitants, during the last century, have been traversing half the globe in search of climate. The physical structure of this singular district has been carefully investigated and described by the geologist, and the beauties of its scenery have been often dwelt upon by the tourist; but its far more important qualities as a winter residence for the delicate invalid, seem scarcely to have attracted attention, even from the medical philosopher."

The observations of the Doctor which contain hints for the improvement of the Undercliff, are also well worthy attention. With all its natural advantages, as he well observes, its accommodations are at present few; though numerous spots present themselves, along this beautiful district, admirably suited for residences. "On these, detached houses might be built; and if the protection of a garden-wall and a few trees, where they do not already exist, were added, the natural advantages of the place would be increased, and a sheltered walk secured during the most stormy weather. If any thing in the form of a *town* is attempted, the beauty of the place, as well as the advantages as a residence for invalids, will be greatly diminished. If, on the other hand, the plan which I have suggested (and to which the place lends itself in a remarkable manner) of building single houses, each surrounded with its garden, is judiciously adopted, and the houses erected with due regard to the wants of delicate invalids, the Undercliff bids fair to excel all other winter residences in this country, and the Isle of Wight will have added to its title of the Garden of England, that of the British Madeira."

We may here in conclusion repeat, that all the peculiar appearances of the Undercliff, and very much of the wild and singular kind of beauty it possesses, are attributable to the

landslips already alluded to, and which are still frequently occurring on a larger or smaller scale. One of these slips took place at East End, in the year 1810, which was the means of destroying 30 acres of ground; and another in 1818, which carried away 50 acres. But the grand subsidence that produced the terrace of the Undercliff, taken as a whole, must have happened many centuries back; since churches have occupied portions of its site during that long period, and yet remain unharmed, save by the silent influences of time and the elements. As to the cause of the landslips themselves, it is supposed to be no more than this. The marley substratum on which the rocks repose, becomes gradually so saturated with the springs which exist in abundance at this part of the coast, that it is pressed out by the incumbent weight, and washed away by the successive returns of the tide; when the cliffs, deprived of support, take the place of the soil which preceded them, and there remain, forming a new or *under-cliff*, which, being capable of resisting the waves, forms an outer defence against them through future ages. Such causes, attended with such effects, may possibly exist elsewhere; but in no case, it may well be imagined, can they have combined to produce such an union of beauty with grandeur as is here exhibited. The most charming wooded retirements, the most secluded and romantic dells, are here found in close contiguity with sea views of glorious extent, and inland rocks and hills of the most magnificent and towering forms; while the rustic church, the embosomed village, the tasteful cottage, or the elegant seat, are perpetually meeting the eye, along with the cultured field, the wildly flowing stream, or the peasant's abode encircled by its literally *ever-green* garden. To objects such as these, it must be impossible for any description to do justice: nevertheless, our plan permits of no alternative to the attempt, and we therefore once more entreat the reader to be present with us in imagination at East End.

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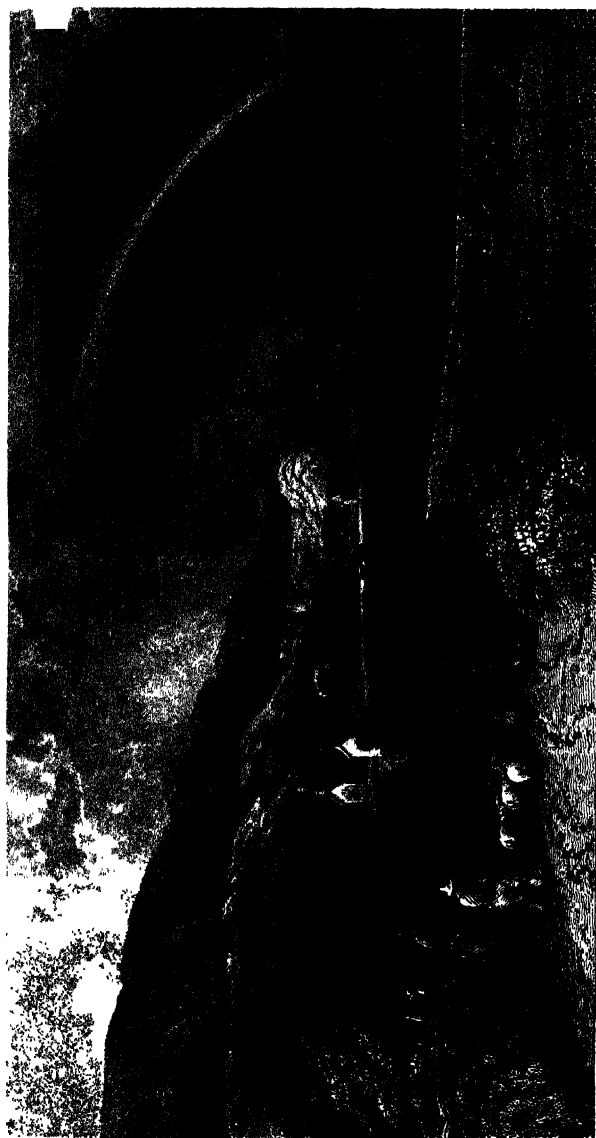
ST BONIFACE DOWN.

This place is one wide scene of broken, piled, strewn, and confused rocks, occurring in every possible variety of altitude, position, and form. For exhibiting the most striking effects of a land-slip on this coast, no part of the Undercliff could be better chosen. Indeed, though the masses of broken rock are inferior in magnitude to those at the western extremity, called Rocken End, where the impending cliffs are also more imposing, there is a character of extreme wildness about East End, which is approached by nothing else in the island.

From this spot we proceed along the base of *St. Boniface Down*, a vast hill of chalk, scantily covered with verdure, parts of whose sides are exceedingly precipitous. On one of its steepest slopes, near the top, is a small spring, much venerated by the country people under the name of St. Boniface Well. A spring at so great a height is considered a natural phenomenon. It is accessible only by a rough path, or rather rude flight of steps, which the devotees of the Well have worn in the turf by their approaches to it.

All our praises of the scenery of the Undercliff will appear justified in the eyes of the traveller, if he but pauses to survey the vale of BONCHURCH just before the road begins to descend into it. Several miles of the surface of this extraordinary spot, with the grand line of chalk rock which forms its northern boundary, lie stretched before him. His gratification will be increased, if, instead of immediately descending, he quits the road, and takes the base of the cliff to the *Pulpit Rock*, an advanced crag so called from a wooden cross placed on its summit, from which a prospect as extensive as beautiful is commanded. Then, returning to the road, he should follow its steep descent and its windings, until they conduct him to the most secluded part of the romantic dell, where, on the left, rises a gigantic ridge of the fallen rock, the space between which and the upper cliff forms this lovely valley. The ridge is distinguished by a platform and flag-staff, by ascending to which

he will gain another glorious view. The *medley* of objects is what here chiefly characterises the scene, though that word is ill adapted either to its beauty or grandeur. One writer sums them up under the terms of "barren rocks, and prolific earths; elevated cliffs, broken masses, and precipitous descents; an expanded sea, a winding rivulet, and a miniature fen; uncultivated wastes, and fruitful patches; the wild flower-dell, and the rich parterre; the peasant's hut, the farmer's yard, and the adorned villa;" the whole "mingled and adjusted with the elegance of taste, and the apparent carelessness of Nature."

The seat of W. H. Surman, Esq., called *East Dean*, stands near the church, fronting the English channel. Its style is rustic, with some mixture of the antique, with which latter feature the interior is fitted up to correspond.

The *Church*, like the village, takes its name from St. Boniface; "Bonchurch" being only a contraction from "St. Boniface Church." Its situation is yet nearer the sea than Mr. Surman's residence; and it stands on the same steep declivity that leads down to it. Shaded by reverend elm-trees, and affording some indications of Norman architecture, it is a little edifice that cannot be viewed without interest. The parts that wear the most decided aspect of antiquity, are the plain semicircular arch between the body and chancel, and the inner door-way of the south porch, which is also semicircular, and its mouldings decorated, where perfect, with the embattled fret and chevron ornaments. In these we trace such relics of the Norman age, as have probably suffered no change, but from the hand of time, since the first erection of the building, which is supposed to have taken place shortly subsequent to the Conquest. The windows, though of small dimensions, have either plain-pointed or trefoiled heads, and, no doubt, therefore, are of later date. A large oaken cross is placed within the east window, and forms a conspicuous addition to the communion-place.

At Bonchurch was born one of the heroes of the British navy. In the reign of Queen Anne, an orphan boy of this village, named Hobson, was apprenticed by the parish to a tailor at a place called Niton, about seven miles distant. While seated one day on his master's shop-board, a squadron of our men of war was seen passing; and young Hobson, in common with nearly all the rest of the inhabitants, ran down to the beach to view the spectacle. In a moment of enthusiasm he jumped into a boat, rowed towards the squadron, and, having reached the admiral's ship, was received on board as a volunteer: whereupon he cast the boat adrift, and *that* having been picked up a few days afterwards, while his hat, which in his hurry he had left behind him, was found upon the shore, the impression that he had met with a watery grave was entertained by all on land who had known him. But the youth was now upon the element, and in the line of life, that exactly accorded with the native bias of his mind; and the very next day was destined to exhibit him in his true character. The squadron fell in with a French fleet; an engagement took place, in which, for some time, the victory appeared doubtful; and Hobson, after bearing a cheerful share in two hours' hard fighting, began to grow impatient, and asked of a sailor near him for what object the two fleets were contending. Being told that the action must last till the white *rag* at the enemy's mast-head was struck, he exclaimed, "Oh! if that's all, I'll see what I can do." At this moment the ships of the two admirals were engaged yard-arm and yard-arm, and both obscured in smoke. Our young hero, noticing the latter circumstance, was seized with the extraordinary resolution to attempt hauling down the enemy's flag with his own hands! Accordingly, he climbed the shrouds, walked across the main-yard, and unperceived gained that of the French admiral; when, mounting with the utmost celerity to the main-top-gallant-mast head, he seized the flag, and returned with it to his own ship. The

disappearance of the flag was soon noticed: the British tars shouted "Victory!" the French crew were thrown into confusion, and forsook their guns: and, before their officers could succeed in their attempts to rally them, the English sailors boarded and became triumphant. At this juncture Hobson descended to the main-deck from the shrouds, with the French flag wound round his arm, to the astonishment of all who beheld him. He was ordered to the quarter-deck, where some of the officers seemed disposed to view with more indignation than applause this very irregular method of "striking the flag." But the admiral, entertaining different notions of the exploit, immediately promoted its author, who, favoured by such an opening, rose rapidly in his profession; while none of those who had known the poor 'prentice-boy at Niton, had an idea that they could claim acquaintance with the gallant hero who was at length become so celebrated as *Admiral Hobson*. One day, however, soon after that admiral had received the honour of knighthood, with other more substantial marks of favour, from his sovereign, a party of naval officers appeared in the village in which the tailor and his wife still resided. They stopped at the humble door of the hero's former residence, and, to the astonishment of its inmates, requested to be accommodated with such plain fare as could in a short time be prepared for them. All objections were over-ruled; and though nothing more luxurious than bacon and eggs could be obtained, to a dish of those viands they sat down, inviting their hosts to partake not only of the repast, but of some wine they had taken care to have conveyed with them. Under the influence of the generous beverage, the conversation soon grew animated on all sides; particularly as regarded the chief of the party, who, addressing himself principally to the tailor's wife, endeavoured, by every indirect means he could devise, to recal her recollection of himself. Failing in every attempt, he at last began a verse of a ballad that had been often sung in her hearing by

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the graceless apprentice-lad. "For all the world like our poor Hobby!" she then exclaimed, the tears rising to her eyes; while the admiral (for he, of course, it was) became scarcely less affected. The rest may be conceived untold. All was at once astonishment and joy; and the gallant sailor did not quit his worthy entertainers, it may be supposed, without leaving them very handsome tokens whereby in future to remember their *ci-devant* apprentice, Admiral Hobson.

St. Boniface Cottage, the property of Charles Popham Hill, Esq., is our next object of attention. Standing at the foot of the mountain-down from which it takes name, and embosomed in lofty trees and other marks of luxuriant vegetation, while the fine scenery of the coast is not excluded, this residence may rank with the most happily situated in this quarter of the island.

The western extremity of the down is approached as we reach VENTNOR, where there are two houses of entertainment; of one of which the traveller should avail himself, unless his intention be to proceed without stopping to Niton. The first arrived at, the "Crab and Lobster," is small, but in a fine situation. The other is the "Ventnor Hotel," the view from which is enchanting. The scenery at *Ventnor Cove* is universally admired: a short walk from either of the inns will place it within the visitor's observation. Among the variety of picturesque features here, are the bold eminence of the down; the cliff, crowned by a corn-mill, and the little stream that tumbles to the shore after working the mill; the fine open beach; and, though last, not least in pleasing effect, the habitations of the fishermen, with whom the cove is a favourite residence.

The village of STEEPHILL is about a mile from that of Ventnor. It may be placed after Bonchurch in point of romantic character. Formerly it was much celebrated for a cottage-villa, the property of the late Earl Dysart, which,

placed on a lofty terrace to the right of the road, backed by the bold Uppercliff, and judiciously screened by noble trees, at once possessed all the advantages of commanding prospects and the most strict seclusion. All the natural beauties of the situation remain; and, in addition to them, *Steephill*, as the seat was called, from a cottage has become a castle, having been entirely rebuilt by its present possessor, John Hamborough, esq. Its appearance, when near, is not quite equal perhaps to what was intended; but, from several more distant points of view, the effect is imposing, and, as will be seen from the engraving, adds a grand feature to the native magnificence of the spot. The prospect from the summit of the present structure must be seen to be appreciated: the open channel in front, and the tract of country in the direction of St. Lawrence, are what will chiefly elicit admiration.

Other attractive objects at hand, are a *cascade*, formed by the artificial union of two springs running towards the cliff; and a *cave* in the cliff itself, reached by some steps cut in the rock, that will repay the slight trouble of the access by the fine view of the shore obtained from it.

By proceeding along the edge of the cliff for a trifling distance, the tourist will arrive at a station of the preventive service; and then at a small platform of artillery, which forms the seaward boundary of Lord Yarborough's grounds, attached to his elegant marine *Villa* at St. Lawrence. The late Sir Richard Worsley fitted up this villa in a style worthy of his refined taste, and adorned it with a gateway, by Inigo Jones, brought from Hampton Court; a pavilion, designed from the temple of Minerva at Athens; a little temple, called the seat of Virgil, ornamented with a bust of that poet; and a Grecian green-house, copied from the temple of Neptune at Corinth. Of these, the pavilion and green-house only remain; and most of the pieces of *virtu* formerly collected here are now at Appuldurcombe. The grounds are not exten-

sive, but are laid out with much taste, and with a judicious care to take all possible advantage of the picturesquely-varying surface.

The village of ST. LAWRENCE is only a continuation of the romantic beauties that adorn Steephill. The *Church* is almost unique with regard to size, being, with one exception, the smallest edifice of its kind in Great Britain. Its dimensions are, length, 20 feet; width, 12 feet; height, to the eaves, 6 feet. But it should be noticed that the ground, externally, is somewhat raised around the building. The smallness of the structure is perhaps one chief evidence of its antiquity; and it is far from improbable that the *walls*, in great part, are of the Saxon era, though all the arches for windows cut in them are of much more recent date. Within, at the east-end, is a transparency of the resurrection of Christ, in a stained-glass frame.

The route may now be varied to advantage by an ascent to the upper cliff, an opportunity for doing which, without much fatigue, is afforded soon after quitting St. Lawrence. From this elevation we may enjoy, as we proceed, an uninterrupted view of the sea; while, between that object and our path, the Undercliff, with all its rock varieties, delightful seats, and rustic embellishments, will lie far below, indeed, but not at too great a distance for perfect observation. Very shortly we perceive *Old Park*, the residence of Thomas Haddon, esq., and trace, as in a map, all the details of its grounds, interspersed with masses of the fallen rock, and varied by a dairy, corn-mill, and bathing-house.

Mirables is next seen,—the charming seat of Mrs. Arnold. Massive fragments of rock, and green plantations, occupy the space between us and the house, whose front is to the sea, looking upon the mighty element from a terrace, led up to by a sharp but undulating ascent from the shore. All the accompaniments of this residence are of the most attractive character.

From that part of the cliff at which we are viewing them, a young female was *blown* over into the depth below, by a sudden gust of wind, in the summer of the year 1831. Wonderful to relate, she escaped unhurt, through alighting upon some underwood; the only inconvenience to her, (besides the fright), being that she then pursued her walk to Niton by the base of the cliff, instead of along its brow.

Orchard Cottage, the property of General Sir Willoughby Gordon, now appears; but to view it, with some other seats in the neighbourhood, to more advantage, we must descend by *Cripple Path*, a way cut by steps in the side of the cliff, and affording seats about half-way down, composed of projecting ledges of the rock, which, though of Nature's forming, are almost artificial in their aspect. Having regained the road, we cannot notice without admiration the stupendous precipices over head; and must regard with surprise the diminutive figures of such persons as may be walking along the top, or descending by the path we lately occupied. "The Orchard," as the villa just mentioned is sometimes called, may now be more nearly inspected. It is of irregular, but picturesque form; built with a mixture of brick and the stone of the country; and decorated in front with a choice variety of flowers, evergreens, and fruit-trees, all luxuriating upon a succession of terraces, formed by artificial improvements of the natural surface.

On the right, opposite the Orchard, stands *Beauchamp*, a small villa, the property of Mrs. Bennett, of Northcourt.

Near *Puckaster Cove*, on the left, is the very pleasing cottage of James Vine, esq. It presents a semi-circular front, of rustic character, to the ocean; and is backed by two vast fragments of rocks, precipitated from the cliff above in a long past age. At Puckaster, Charles II. landed, July 1, 1675, after encountering a dangerous storm at sea; an event duly recorded in the parish register of Niton.

In the direction of Niton *village* stands *West-Cliff House*,

the handsome residence of Robert Holford, Esq. We will now suppose that we had reached that village by pursuing the path on the cliff, and will take this opportunity to describe it.

NITON stands nearly a mile from the shore, in a very secluded situation, at the south-eastern foot of St. Catherine's Hill. It is sometimes styled *Crab* Niton, from the number of fish of that species found on the adjacent coast. Two little streets of neat, thatched, stone dwellings, with orchards generally attached, form this village of small importance, but, doubtless, of considerable antiquity. It has a comfortable inn. The *Church*, consisting of two aisles, with a tower and spire, was one of those given by Fitz-Osborne to his abbey of Lyra. It passed to the crown at the dissolution of religious houses, and, together with five churches in Hampshire, was given to Queen's College, Oxford, by Charles I., in exchange for the college *plate*—an article of more utility to the monarch, in the then position of his affairs, than even a larger number of ecclesiastical benefices. The vicarage of Godshill, with its chapelry of Whitwell, is attached to this living. In the grave-yard is the basement of an ancient *cross*, an ornament which no cemetery was without in the catholic ages.

Returning on our track, we shall next reach the *Sand-Rock Hotel*, whose site is truly delightful, and whose appearance, as in the case of several houses of a similar description upon this coast, is rather that of a gentleman's seat than an hotel. The accompanying view will fully justify this remark. The seaward look-out is peculiarly bold, from the position of the house near the southern point of the island, and the extent of the prospect thereby commanded.

A road has been formed of late years from the hotel to the Sand-Rock Spring; proceeding by which we shall first notice *Mount Cleves*, a modern-built residence, the property of John Mortimer, Esq. We may then survey the results of the great landslip in February, 1799, by which nearly one hun-

dred acres of the cliff were separated from the general mass, and carried towards the sea, breaking in their progress into terrific chasms, causing the destruction of a cottage, and leaving all around the traces of devastation and confusion. The wild disorder and imposing forms of the rocks here irresistibly fix the attention: on every side their aspects are at once savage and commanding. The pretty cottage connected with the Spring soon appears, and we descend from it to the source of the chalybeate, which is in the cliff, about 500 yards from the shore, and 150 feet above the level of the sea. The cottage itself is a *dispensary*, established by Mr. Waterworth, a surgeon of Newport, who discovered the spring in 1808, and erected the building which now encloses it in the following year. In a letter on the properties of the water, the discoverer says: "this aluminous chalybeate, on examination, not only by the taste, but also by the application of chemical tests, was found to contain sulphat of iron and sulphat of alumine, substances which, though rarely met with in combination with water, yet exist in this in such large proportions as to give it a very distinguishing character." Hence, "it possesses the properties of a tonic of the most powerful kind," and "has been found singularly efficacious in the cure of many very important and dangerous diseases, particularly those termed asthenic, arising from a relaxed fibre and languid circulation, such as indigestion, weakness of stomach, loss of appetite, tremblings, with all the varieties of nervous and hypochondriacal disorders," &c. &c. The descent from the spring towards the shore is by a rude and precipitous path cut in the cliff; on reaching the bottom of which we are anew struck with the extreme wildness of the scene, to which a considerable landslip, that took place in the winter of 1832-33, is seen to have contributed its share.

Pursuing a scarcely perceptible path which threads this wilderness of mighty fragments, we reach *Rocken-End*, the

termination of the Undercliff in this direction, and comprising some of its most majestic features. Here the boundary of the rocks is not circumscribed by the common line of the coast, but extends far into the sea, where the vast masses form what is called ***Rocken-End Race,*** and have probably lain from the time of the grand convulsion that at once severed them from the mainland, and laid the terrace of the Undercliff where it now reposes. Nor are these the only rocks which, visible only at low water, threaten destruction to vessels overtaken by tempestuous weather near this coast. Not far westward lie the dangerous ledges, known, from the places to which they are nearest, by the names of Atherfield, Chilton, and Brooke; the proximity of either of which, in untoward circumstances, is sufficient to dismay the heart of the stoutest mariner.

The engravings will give the reader a better idea of ***Black-gang Chine,*** the object to which the path from the Spring conducts us, than could be conveyed by the most luminous description. Traces of recent landslips were perpetually occurring as we trod this path early in the year 1833; and the Chine itself seemed to give evidence of a landslip upon a large scale, as having greatly assisted in its formation. This was especially apparent in the semicircular chasm, seventy-five feet in depth, into which the stream from the hill above now falls, and which clearly appears to have been shaped by the violent disruption of immense masses of the cliff from its sides. The wild ravine that ascends from the summit of the chasm, seems, on the contrary, to have been chiefly moulded by the action of the stream, which, after continued rains, becomes a torrent, and rolls with impetuous force over the verge of the cliff to the beach below. The whole aspect of this Chine is grand, but gloomy: it has neither the beauties of Shanklin, nor the comparative prettiness of Luccombe: savage sublimity is its characteristic. Portions of its steep sides are little less than five hundred feet in height: every part is without a

feature of vegetation; and the almost universal colour of the faces of the cloven sand-rocks so nearly approaches *black*, that it is supposed to have derived its name from that circumstance, as a prefix to the Saxon *gange*, which signified any opening or way in a cliff to the sea shore. More romantic etymologists, however, have favoured us with a very different derivation; assuring us that a *gang* of notorious robbers and pirates once made this place their haunt, and, issuing therefrom for the performance of every possible atrocity, the term *black* became a very proper appellative both for them, and the deeds by which they acquired their bad celebrity. From the summit of the Chine we have a noble prospect of the whole line of coast westward, including Chale, Brixton, and Freshwater Bays; the towering cliffs of Freshwater; the Needles Rocks; and the coast of Dorsetshire in the extreme distance. The descent to the beach presents no difficulties, and is worth performing in order to have a view of the Chine as it appears from thence. The beach is composed of small stones and pebbles, some of which are worn to an exceedingly minute size by the action of the waves, and their consequent mutual attrition. They are the residuum of the natural soil, which is a fine earth, or sand, enclosing them in their original state, but long since washed away by the waters.

The traveller's carriage is supposed to have proceeded empty from the Sand-rock Hotel to Chale, at which village half a miles' walk from the Chine will enable him to rejoin it. Or, if he has returned to the Spring, he may continue his pedestrian excursion over the cliff, and by the preventive look-out, crossing the stream which runs into Black-gang Chine near its source, and enjoying the aspects of the ocean, and the grand objects all around. This too is his opportunity for ascending to the top of *St. Catherine's Hill*, the most elevated point of the Island. the prospect from which, when the weather is favourable, is "infinitely rich, and almost unbounded:"

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BLACKGANG CHINE.

indeed; it takes in the whole circuit of the Wight, except in a single direction, where the view is broken by the Brixton Downs. On a clear day, even the highest part of the French coast, adjoining Cherbourg, may be sometimes perceived; while, to the west, the isles of Portland and Purbeck are plainly distinguishable. The Hampshire coast, near Lymington, appears almost to unite with the Island, the intervening Solent being scarcely seen. As the eye ranges to the north and west, the New Forest, Southampton Water, Portsdown Hill, the Sussex hills, and Beachy Head, beyond Brighton, are successively visible.

The Chine we lately described, is a fissure in the south side of this stupendous hill. Its extreme height is nearly nine hundred feet above the level of the sea. Originally, it was called Chale Down; the appellation of St. Catherine's having been bestowed on it from the circumstances thus narrated by Sir Richard Worsley. In the year 1323, Walter de Godyton built a chapel here, and dedicated it to St. Catherine, assigning certain rents for a chantry priest to sing mass, and also to provide lights for the safety of such vessels as might chance to come on this dangerous coast during the night. At the dissolution of chantries, it was perhaps found impracticable to divide the useful from the superstitious part of the institution; so that the whole fell together, the chantry involving the lighthouse in its ruin. By an entry in the registers of the diocese, it appears that, eleven years before the erection of this chapel, there was a hermitage standing on the same spot: the entry is as follows: "Walter de Langstrell admissus ad hermitorium supra mortem de Chale, in insula Vectis, Id. Octobris, A.D. 1312." St. Catherine's Tower, on the summit of the down, is a remain of the ancient religious institution, having been substantially repaired by the lord of the manor, in consideration of its essential service as a landmark. It is of octangular form, finished pyramidically at top;

its height thirty-five feet and a half. On its reparation, says Sir Richard Worsley, "the foundation of the whole chapel was also cleared and levelled; by which, not only its figure was discovered, but also the floor and stone hearth of the priest's little cell at the south-west corner." In addition to the tower, a light-house was erected here a few years back; but the idea of rendering it serviceable by night is now abandoned, the mists by which the hill is so frequently obscured having been found to render it useless.

The northern slope of the down is graced by a seat, the property of John Barlow Hoy, Esq., called *Medina Hermitage*, the prospect from which is exceedingly rich and extensive. Immediately above the house, on the commanding brow of the hill, appears a column, seventy-two feet in height, erected by the late Michael Hoy, Esq., and bearing the following inscription:

In commemoration of the visit of his Imperial Majesty, Alexander I., Emperor of all the Russias, to Great Britain, in the year 1814, *and in remembrance of many happy years' residence in his dominions, this pillar was erected by Michael Hoy.*

The situation of the column renders it a conspicuous object from a very large proportion of the Island.

Having reached CHALE, a neat but straggling village, our attention is attracted by its *Church*, an edifice of the time of Henry I., having been built by Hugh Vernon in that reign, and still retaining some characteristics of its period. The tower, which is handsome, and bears some resemblance to that of Carisbrooke, appears with its original small, and pointed, or trefoil-headed openings. At its north-east angle is a turret, containing the stairs, lighted by slits and quatrefoils. All the other windows in the building appear, from their dimensions, to have been introduced since its first completion. The arches of the interior, between the body and aisle, are pointed; the

columns, supporting them, very squat, being only about 3 feet 10 inches high, although 3 feet 3 inches in circumference: these, perhaps, afford the best evidence of the correctness of the date ascribed to the structure. A small piscina may be noticed in the south wall.

The eastern end of *Chale Farm* affords a rather curious relic of ancient domestic architecture.

The road to BRIXTON (which has been described) is without interest: but the *Bay* named from that village, and *Chale Bay*, with some other features of the coast, deserve remark. Brixton rocks are highly dangerous to shipping: they lie about midway between Black-gang Chine and Freshwater Gate. The cliffs, both eastward and westward, are broken by a number of chines on an inferior scale; of which, *Walpen*, *Whale*, *Cowledge*, *Shipledge*, *Barnes*, *Grange*, *Chilton*, *Brooke*, and *Compton*, are the principal. *Jackman's Chine* may be said to lead down from Brixton village to the shore. *Barnes Hole* is a remarkable cavern, of extraordinary height, and most gloomy aspect. Another cave, near Grange Chine, is called *Dutchman's Hole*, from a large ship of that nation that ran into it. The rocks about Chale Bay have proved fatal to a great number of vessels; among the rest to a Dutch galliot, the "Diana Jans," which was totally wrecked upon them in February, 1830: the crew, however, were saved by a feat of daring performed by one of the sailors, who swam ashore with a rope, and by that means established a communication between the land and his despairing comrades.

From Brixton to MOTTISTONE, two miles. This village is very pleasantly situated, both as regards its marine and inland prospects. On the down that overlooks it, is a relic of very early times, called *Long-stone*, being a rude mass of the hardest stone of the country, twelve feet high, placed on end by art, and entirely of the character of those unwrought remains which antiquaries in general have agreed to consider

as Druidical. Near it lies a similar but smaller mass, in a horizontal position, and partly buried in the earth. From the apparent disconnexion of these stones with any greater number of the same kind, we are not disposed to view them as having been placed here for any ecclesiastical purpose; more especially as *Mottistone,* which seems to have taken name from the larger fragment, approaches very nearly to a compound Saxon word, which, in modern English, would signify the *stone* at which the folk-*motes,* or meetings of the people, were frequently held in old times. The Long-stone might have been of unknown antiquity, and held in veneration for that reason, even at the period when custom prescribed the holding of such meetings at it: the practice of rearing such rude monuments having been among the primeval habits of man, and one that may be traced to ages anterior to that of the Hebrew patriarchs. Furrowed by the elements, and tinted by the varying dyes which untold centuries have impressed upon it, this stone forcibly "recals to memory those times, to which neither our calculation nor our history can ever attain."

Mottistone *Church* consists of a body, tower, chancel, and aisle; of which the two former appear the oldest portions, and were probably erected before the reign of Edward IV., in whose time the aisle was perhaps built as a chancel. This supposition is derived from the form of the pointed window at the east end of that aisle, as well as from the carved rose that decorates one of the terminations of its label. The *present* chancel seems to have been added about the time of Henry VIII.; the window at its east end being square-headed, as are all the other windows in the building, with the exception of one, which is very obtusely pointed. The arches in the body are tolerably high-pointed, and supported by polygonal columns: those between the chancel and aisle are obtuse, the columns clustered and fluted, and were probably substituted,

at the erection of this part of the structure, for the original south wall of the aisle, or first chancel.

The manor-house, near the church, was the birth-place, in 1514, of Sir John Cheke, celebrated for his attainments as a linguist, and more especially for his skill in the Greek tongue. When not more than twenty-six years of age, he was chosen first Greek professor at Cambridge, in a foundation then recently instituted by Henry VIII.; and at forty was appointed preceptor to Prince Edward, afterwards Edward VI. That young monarch, from a high sense of his merit, conferred on him the distinction of knighthood, and soon afterwards made him chamberlain of the exchequer, and admitted him to his privy council. But with the life of Edward ended all the happy days of Sir John; for, having taken part with Lady Jane Grey, and become her secretary, he was arraigned and condemned for high treason. He obtained a remission of the sentence, indeed, from Queen Mary; but, after residing some time abroad, was again forcibly conducted to England, and involved in new troubles, on the ground of his protestantism. Confined in the Tower, he was told plainly that he must "turn, or burn;" an alternative, under which, alas! his mind was without sufficient strength to support him. He made at first an equivocatory, and finally an open and public recantation; did penance for his "heresy;" and hoped, unhappy man! to be at peace. But shame and mortification brought him to a premature end; for he lived but little more than a year of mental bondage and misery, in lieu of acquiring the glory of martyrdom a twelvemonth before.

We leave Mottistone with the remark, that its *rocks* are among the number of the dangers of this iron-bound coast, and proved the destruction of the *Carn-Brea Castle* East Indiaman, in the month of July, 1829. The fated vessel had quitted Spithead at nine o'clock in the morning, and by three in the afternoon of the same day was a wreck opposite this

village. Providentially, however, the crew and passengers were all saved.

Brooke, formerly only a chapelry to Freshwater, now claims the honours of a separate parish. The village stands in a sheltered and retired situation, and yields a delightful view from the site of its *Church*. The only dwelling of importance is *Brooke House*, the residence of the lord of the manor.

There are two ways of proceeding to Freshwater Gate from this village: one by a footpath, not always visible, along the summits of the cliffs; the other, the carriage-road, which leads over Shalcombe, Compton, and Afton Downs. For once the carriage way is that to be preferred, as the footpath affords little to interest, if we except several small chines, and an uninterrupted view of the grand marine element. One of the chines had received a very recent enlargement from a landslip at the period of our visit. The effects were seen in a chasm encroaching upon our very track; and we saw various instances besides of founders of the cliffs, these having been unusually numerous during the late winter. Some undercliffs in miniature were also very apparent.

The road over the downs presents a succession of prospects that are truly magnificent. From *Afton Down* especially, whose extreme height is five hundred feet above the sea, a very large proportion of the Island can be distinctly made out. In front are the towering cliffs of Freshwater; and, beyond them, those of the Isle of Purbeck, and even the distant coast of Portland. To the right stretches the valley of the Yar, with that little river winding in the midst to where it breaks into the Solent at Yarmouth. Behind, we trace not only the general inland view, but the dark romantic features of Black-gang Chine; while, to the left, we have the ever glorious ocean. On one occasion, indeed, we lost the greater part of this noble prospect, through a mist which was driving up from the sea; but were amply compensated by the attendant circumstances.

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FRESHWATER

The mist filled the valley before us to a considerable extent; but, beyond its boundary, the village and church of Freshwater, with the whole tract from thence to the Solent, lay burnished, as it were, by the morning sun-light. The ocean was hidden from the view, though its waves were still heard breaking upon the not distant beach. The dense vapour also concealed a great part of the lofty eminence and cliffs fronting us on the farther side of the valley; but could not prevent a beautiful sight at an elevation it was unable to reach. For there, entirely insulated by clouds from the world below, rose the *High-Down Cliffs*, as they are called, the loftiest of the Freshwater range, the sun shining with the most vivid brightness on their chalky faces, as well as on a stretch of their green summits marked by the beacon, which, with the point it stood on, and the Needles Point beyond it, seemed to belong not at all to earth, but to some more glorious sphere. To add to the effect, a long line of clouds from the south-west broke against the face of the farthest cliff, which forced them, by the obstruction thus presented, to curl high in a resplendent wreath over its top. We had read descriptions of somewhat similar scenes in the pages of the poet and romance-writer; but, we confess, with all our anticipations of beauty and grandeur as connected with the Isle of Wight, we were equally startled and delighted with this scene at the place and time mentioned.

Descending the western slope of Afton Down, we reach *Freshwater Gate*, literally the *gate*, or entrance from the sea, between the downs, to the village of *Freshwater*, which stands a little inland. This village is scarce worth the traveller's attention, affording nothing of greater interest than its *Church*, dedicated to All Saints, and attached to the richest benefice in the Island, in the gift of St. John's College, Cambridge. An incumbent in the early part of the seventeenth century was father to the celebrated Dr. Robert Hooke, who was born here in the year 1635, and who died in London, aged

nearly eighty-seven, though, during the early part of his life, he was so weakly as not to be expected to reach manhood. His strong mechanical genius, and his eminence in natural philosophy, procured him high reputation; and he naturally became a leading member of the Royal Society, when that learned body was founded. For some little time prior to his death, he is said to have retained his seat at a table, wholly engrossed by his literary pursuits, which he would not interrupt by the process of undressing and going to bed.

The source of the river Yar is within a few yards of the sea at the *Gate*; and the near contiguity of a fresh spring to the mighty body of saline waters, was perhaps the circumstance that gave name to the parish within which that river takes its rise. The ocean, in rough weather, very frequently rolls over the intervening bank, and mingles its rude waves with the scarcely perceptible flow of the little stream. Formerly the *salt* and the *fresh* waters approached even more closely; and it has been observed that "a few men might then, by excavation, have formed another island;" which once accomplished, "*who* could have re-united the separated lands, when the sea had made a breach?" There is a small assemblage of cottages, and a neat and convenient *Hotel*, called the "Albion," at this spot; which may thus be pleasantly rendered a resting-place, from whence to visit the various remarkable objects in the neighbourhood.

Among those objects, the *Bay* of Freshwater is not the least pleasing; nor is it the smallest recommendation of its shores, that they present every requisite facility, and the purest water, for sea-bathing. Pursuing its margin, in a boat, *eastwardly*, we may inspect the famous *Arched Rock*, which, together with a neighbouring insulated mass, has been long parted from the cliff to which both were originally attached, but which is now about six hundred feet distant. The Arched Rock is a natural curiosity that deserves attention; its perforation having been

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ARCHED ROCK, FRESHWATER BAY.

effected entirely by the action of the same resistless element, to which the separation of the rock itself from the parent cliff is to be attributed. The Afton Down *caverns* are next visited; and then *Compton Bay,* with its delightful walk on the sands as far as Brooke Point. During the whole of this excursion the cliffs are seen in perspective as far as St. Catherine's Hill, which nobly terminates the view.

Taking a *westward* direction from the Gate, the tourist may choose between land and water in proceeding to the Needles Point. By the first-mentioned approach he will enjoy views of sublime extent, as he pursues his way over the *High Down* (whereon is the beacon before spoken of) and its continuation called *Needles Down,* near whose extremity is placed the well-known Light-House. Arrived at the *Point,* which is the western termination of Freshwater Cliffs, and of the Island, the prospect, in clear weather, will absolutely astonish by its boldness and grandeur. The *Light-House* itself merits observation. It has ten argand lamps, and the same number of plated reflectors; the united effulgence from which is extremely brilliant. In this building reside the widow, and seven children, of the late light-house-keeper, Thomas Colereine, who, in November 1832, fell, as reported, from the High Down cliffs into the sea; but the shrugs and whispers of fishermen and others upon this coast point to a darker catastrophe, the cause of which is supposed to have been the hatred borne by some unknown individuals against the unfortunate man, on account of his zeal in repressing the too common smuggling propensities of the neighbourhood. However this may have been, it is certain that the body of the deceased was found in the sea, immediately under the beacon, as free from contusions of every kind as if he had indeed been *hurled* to such a distance from the face of the cliff, as to encounter none of its projections in his fall. He had walked on the preceding evening to Freshwater; where, on account of the roughness of the

night, he remained till six o'clock in the morning, when he set out on his return: but that morning was dark, and foggy, and —he returned not! Really, if smuggling *be* the precursor to crimes such as are thus hinted at, it assumes an aspect at which every moral feeling must shudder. The situation of a family upon this exposed promontory, during the boisterous gales that prevail perhaps throughout two-thirds of the whole year, is cheerless enough, without the prospect of dangers to be incurred by treading in the path of duty. The violence of the wind here at times, can be estimated by none who have not witnessed its effects: the greensward that covers the point is constantly strewn with fragments of the cliff blown upon it; and, for days together, the inmates of the light-house are rendered its prisoners, it being perilous to leave the shelter afforded by its walls, the strength of which, it may be imagined, is far from common.

The *water* excursion from Freshwater Gate to the extremity of the promontory remains to be described. Boats, for either this or the eastward trip, can be readily obtained at the Gate. The westward voyage is the most interesting; as, in addition to the stupendous height of the cliffs, there are no less than eleven *Caves*, for the inspection of the curious, into most of which a boat, or the party it contains, can enter when the weather and state of the tide are propitious. These caves, and the more remarkable rock features of the coast, all of which are pointed out by the boatmen, occur in the following order.

Freshwater Cave, one hundred and twenty feet in depth, and the rude arch about thirty feet wide, and the same high. The sea view from the interior has a very fine effect.

The two *Bays* of Watcombe, and the *Rock* bearing the same name, all of which are delineated in our engravings.

The four *Caves* of Watcombe.

Neptune's Caves: the larger of which is two hundred feet deep; and the smaller, ninety feet. A pistol is sometimes fired

VIEW NEAR FRESHWATER BAY.

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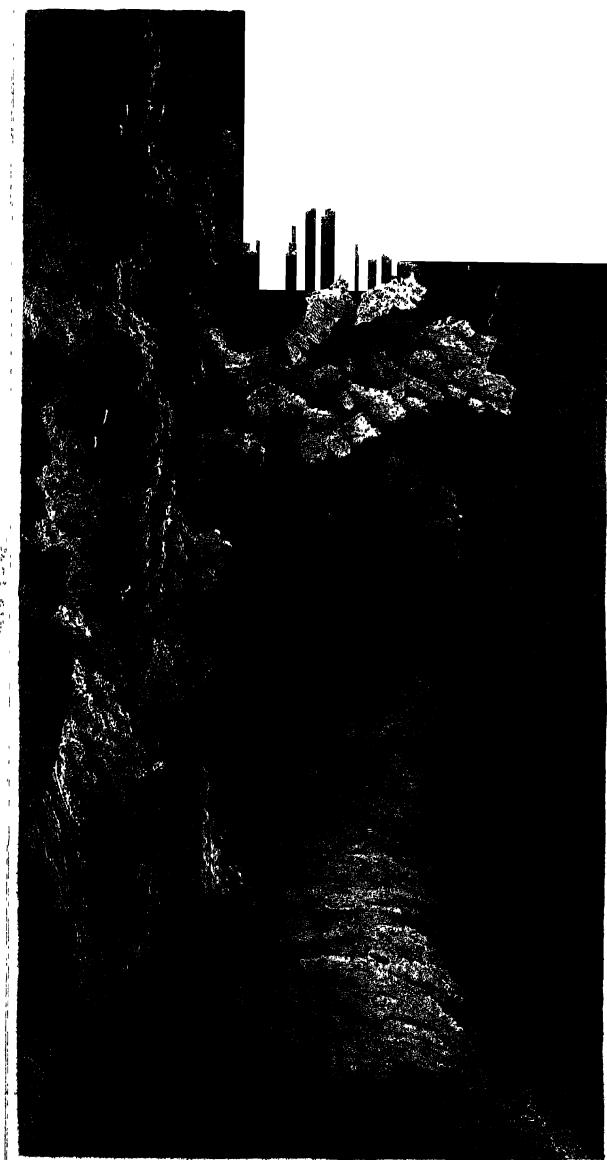
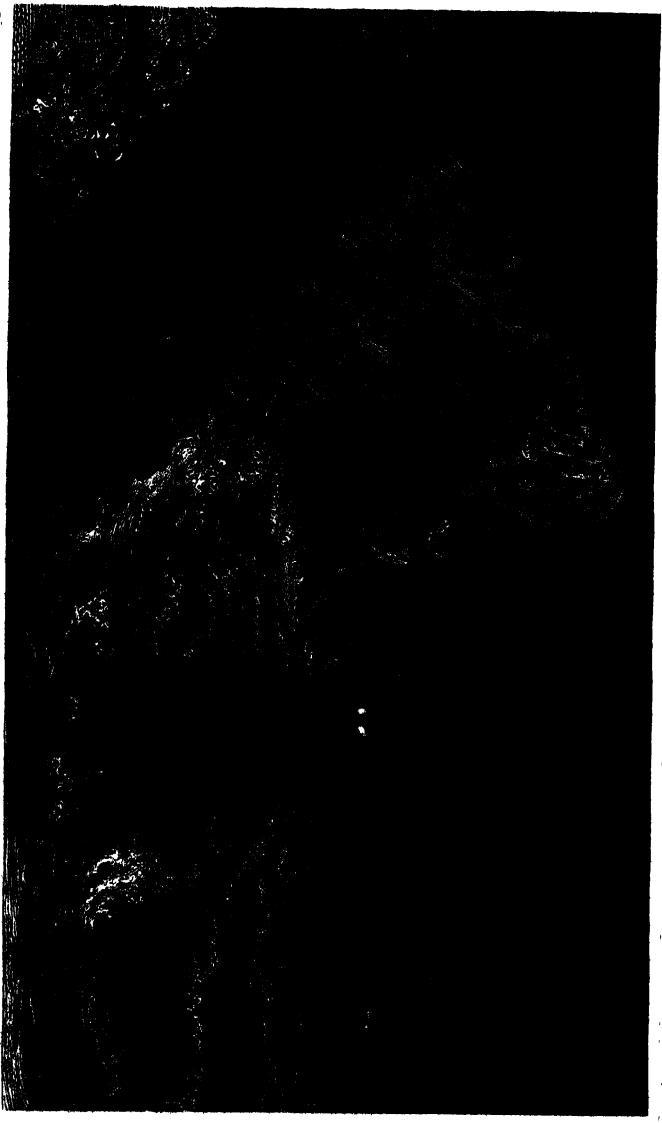
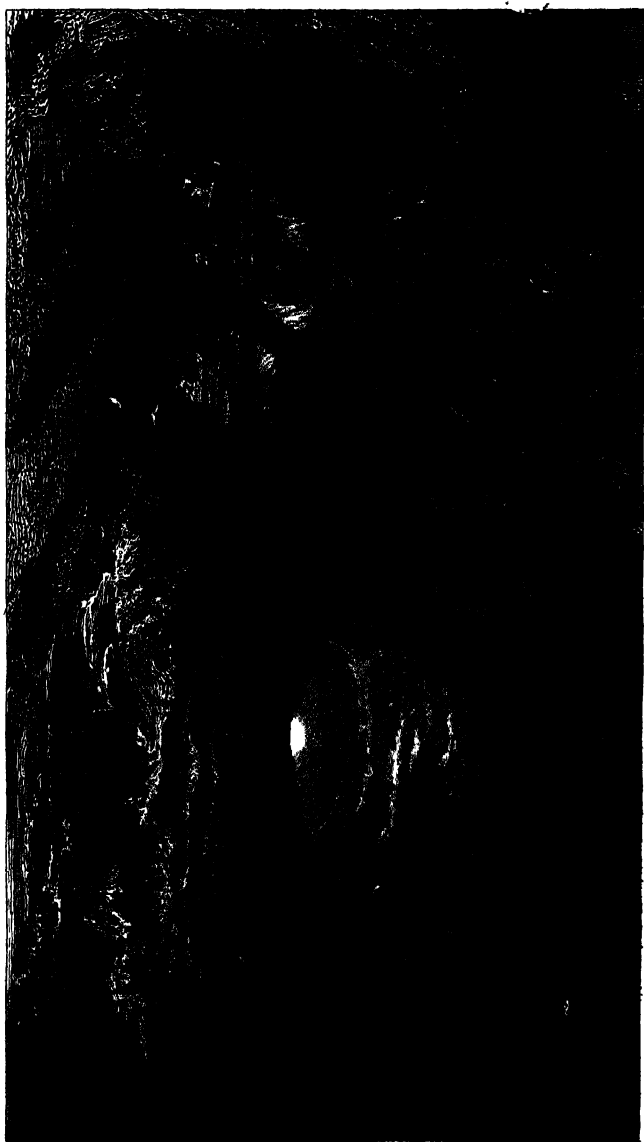

in the first-mentioned, to shew the loudness of the echo, which in truth is perfectly astounding.

Bar Cave, ninety feet deep.

The *High Down Cliffs*, six hundred and seventeen feet high. This is the greatest elevation of the sublime cliffs, that stretch, with greater or less degrees of altitude, from the Gate to the Needles, a distance of three miles. To form a just conception of their height and magnitude, the boat should put out to sea for about a quarter of a mile. Steep as are their sides, sheep-walks are observed partly to descend them; and samphire relieves their dazzling whiteness with its green patches.

Frenchman's Hole, ninety feet deep: so named, the story says, from an escaped prisoner of that nation, who here uselessly concealed himself until starvation consigned him to a narrower and more lasting place of confinement.

Lord Holmes's Parlour, and *Kitchen*.

Roe's Hall, six hundred feet high: and the *Wedge Rock*.

Old Pepper Rock.

The *Main Bench*, a wide stretch of the cliff, in altitude nearly equalling the High Down Cliffs. This is the grand resort, and nesting-place, of the numerous marine birds that frequent these rocks, distinguished by the names of Choughs, Puffins, Willocks, Razor-bills, Cormorants, &c. They are all migratory, and seen here only during the summer months, when the glowing faces of the cliffs, enjoying a constant exposure to the south, supply the fittest of nurseries for their young. Their eggs and feathers are the plunder of the country people, who resort to a well-known but daring feat of enterprise in order to obtain them. First driving a strong stake, or iron bar, into the top of the cliff, near its edge, the adventurer secures one end of a rope to it, and the other to a piece of wood placed cross-wise, so as to resemble a rude seat. By means of this simple apparatus he descends the front of the

precipice, hallooing on his way to scare the birds from their holes in the rocks, when the eggs are his chief object; but when the feathers are his principal concern, he silently secures his prey as they sit within their nests, or seizes them in the act of flying from their lurking-places. In the latter case, the plumage is his only prize; for the flesh of these birds is too rank for human food, though it is used as a bait by the fishermen. The effect of firing a gun from the boat, when beneath these cliffs, is astonishing: myriads of wings are instantaneously in motion, and the air is literally darkened by their flight.

Preston's Bower.

The Needles Rocks, five in number, but of which three only are generally conspicuous. These are of great size and altitude, and have an imposing aspect when viewed from the water, though they look diminutive in comparison from the cliffs above. There can be no doubt that they formed the original *point*, and that the fury of the elements has insulated them, and reduced them to their present forms and sizes. Neither of them now bears the slightest resemblance to the implement of housewifery from which they are named; the original *needle*, or spiral rock so called, which was one hundred and twenty feet high, having been undermined by the waves in 1764, when it consequently fell, with a concussion that was felt at the distance of many miles.

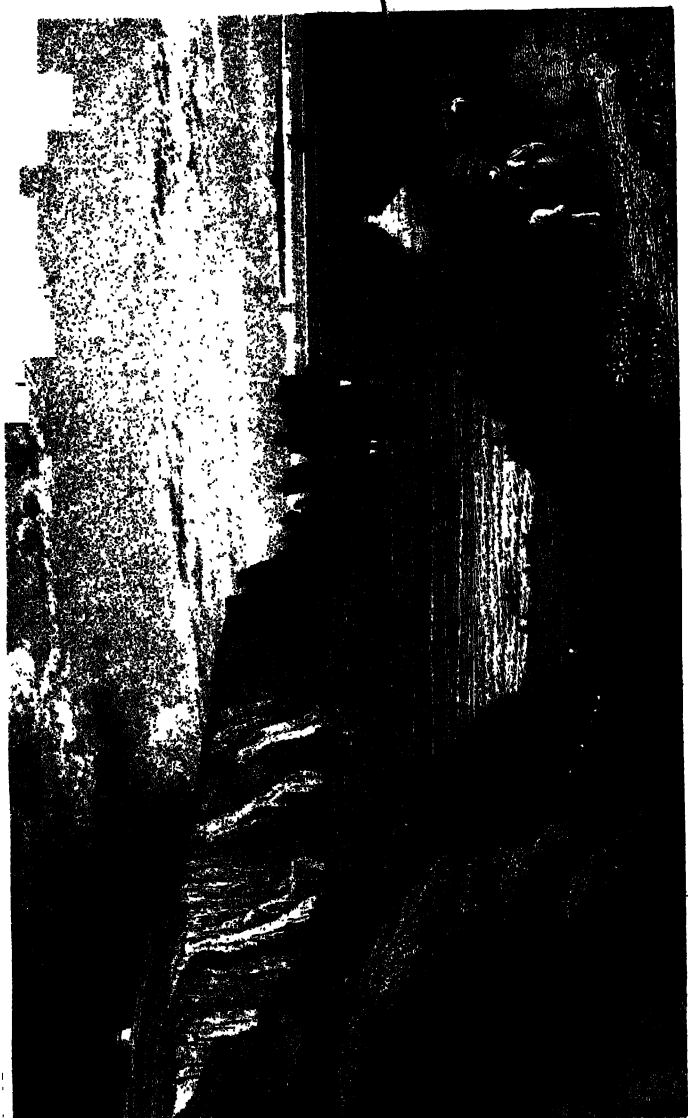
The *Needles Cave*, three hundred feet deep.

Scratchell's Bay, the features of which are peculiarly grand on turning the noble jut of the rocks into it. The point is now rounded; and there are few seasons of the year at which a considerable diminution of temperature will not be experienced in consequence. This of course arises from the northern exposure of the bay, as compared with the southern aspect of the cliffs whose warm reflection we have just quitted. Parties here usually land, and stand within a vast arched

hollow of the cliff, the height of which is said to be two hundred feet; and yet this spacious semicircle seems to extend little more than one-third of the way up the cliff, when observed from the boat after it has again put out into the bay. The indentation of the coast continues for some distance, and forms, towards its northern extremity, what is called *Alum Bay*, on account of the quantity of alum found along its shores. The pearly hue and magical repose of the towering heights we are leaving, strongly contrast, as was remarked by Sir H. Englefield, with "the torn forms and vivid colouring of the clay cliffs on the opposite side. *These* offer a series of points of a sort of scolloped form, and which are often quite sharp and spiry. Deep rugged chasms divide the strata in many places, and not a vestige of vegetation appears in any part: all is wild ruin. The tints of these cliffs are so bright, and so varied, that they have not the appearance of anything natural. Deep purplish red, dusky blue, bright ochreous yellow, gray nearly approaching to white, and absolute black, succeed each other, as sharply defined as the stripes in silk; and after rain, the sun, which from about noon till its setting, in summer, illuminates them more and more, gives a brilliancy to some of these, nearly as resplendent as the high lights on real silk." Various ornaments for the mantel-piece are made of these coloured sands; which are also ingeniously arranged, so as to compose different figures in phials or bottles. They are sold in the Light-House, and at the fancy shops nearly throughout the Island. The white sand is a considerable article of commerce, being much used in the manufacture of glass and china.

There is a chine worn by a stream in the variegated cliff, by which, with no great difficulty, an ascent may be gained to the Needles Down. Should the traveller visit the Light-House from the top of the chine, we advise him not to take the most direct route, which in places approaches the perpendicular much more nearly in fact than in appearance, and a slip

on the smooth sod might be attended with fatal consequences; for the momentum of descent once given to the body, it is deprived of power to arrest its progress, and must be infallibly conducted to the edge of the chalk cliff, and thence, by a fall of at least four hundred feet, to the beach below! A rather more circuitous path, in an inland direction, will prevent the possibility of incurring this danger.

The *Needles Hotel*, contiguous to Alum Bay, offers a delightful place of sojourn at the close of this excursion. From hence the tourist may proceed to the north side of the bay, and the eminence called Headon Hill, the height of which is about four hundred feet. This hill is peculiarly interesting to the geologist, from the facilities afforded by its lofty vertical cliffs for the examination of its strata. The white sand before mentioned is the lowest stratum. It exceeds thirty feet in thickness; and may be traced round the foot of the hill on the north side to Totland and Colwell Bays, of which it forms the bottom, dipping gradually to the north. The *clays* of Alum Bay also appeared so promising to the late Mr. Wedgwood, that he was induced to open pits, in the hope of finding them convertible into porcelain; but, upon trial, they were found not to burn sufficiently white for the purposes of his elegant manufacture.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM ALUM BAY TO YARMOUTH.

THE road from the Needles Hotel, in the direction we are now taking, presents nothing more remarkable, between that house and the village of Freshwater, than the view to the left over Totland and Colwell Bays, with Hurst Castle conspicuously jutting out from the opposite coast of Hampshire. *Colwell* is a small village, with a pretty green opening to the sea: it was distinguished by barracks during the late war, and *then* also boasted its inn.

To the right, observe *Farringford Hill,* the property of John Hamborough, of Steephill, Esq.

FRESHWATER, as before noticed, is an inconsiderable village, containing nothing more interesting than its *Church*, which consists of a tower, body, side aisles, and chancel. Nearly all the openings in the walls are either quite modern, or not older than the period of the square head and label: the oldest window is at the east end of the north aisle. The upper part of the tower has been renovated, and heightened, subsequently to the original building: its west front contains a singular very high-pointed blank arch, pierced by a small door and window. Within is an ancient and nameless tomb, bearing the effigy of a man in armour on a brass plate. On being opened, several years ago, a skeleton was discovered, with the scull lying betwixt the legs: whence it was conjectured that this was the long resting-place of some person of consequence who had been decapitated.

There is a bridge over the river Yar close to the church, and the road thence leads to Yarmouth; but the shorter and pleasanter way is that which conducts through the sweetly retired village of *Norton*. Here the dwellings stand completely embowered in their gardens, whose beauties are relieved and heightened by an occasional intermixture with forest trees. In the neighbourhood are some lovely seats, belonging to Mrs Mitchell, Admiral Sir G. Hammond, Captain Crozier, and Mrs. Hickerson.

We pass to the opposite point of the mouth of the Yar by a ferry-boat, and thus reach the most important town in this quarter of the island, styled YARMOUTH. From its ancient charters, in which it is called *Eremuth*, it is plain that the name of the river on which it stands has been changed from *Ere* to the present somewhat more euphonious appellation. Changes of greater importance have also taken place; as is evident from the yet perceptible traces of various streets, on which no habitation is now standing. But part of this apparent decay may arise from the circumstance, that the place was destroyed by the French in 1377, when Newtown was also devastated; as it is possible that, at the rebuilding, many entirely new situations were chosen, in lieu of restoring the houses upon their former sites. According to the last census, the number of inhabitants of the town and parish is five hundred and eighty-six. The business of Yarmouth is chiefly derived from the anchorage for shipping afforded by its excellent roadstead, and from its steam-boat communication with Lymington on the opposite shore. The mail-boat leaves Lymington, for Yarmouth, at nine o'clock every morning; and Yarmouth, for Lymington, at three o'clock in the afternoon: the fare, one shilling each person. There is, besides, a steam-packet which plies daily between Yarmouth and Lymington, and which, during the summer months, extends the excursion on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, to Cowes and Ports-

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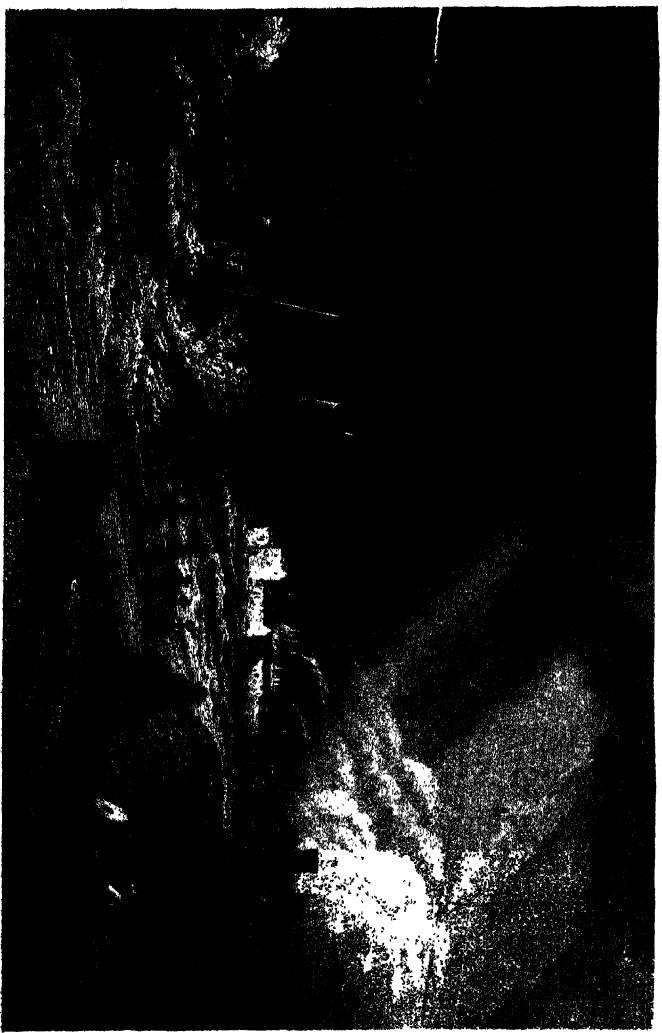
mouth. Excellent sailing-boats may also be obtained here, either for the passage to Lymington, or for viewing the coast scenery from this place to Freshwater Gate. The last-mentioned trip, when the weather is favourable, is one of the most interesting and delightful that the tourist can well take. We may here notice that the *River* is navigable up to Freshwater Mills, and is a beautiful object, viewed from the Solent, at high water.

Yarmouth was one of the three towns in the Isle of Wight, which returned two members each to the imperial parliament until the passing of the reform act in 1832. The elective franchise lay in the mayor and corporation, whose greatest number of votes, during the thirty years preceding their loss of the privilege, was *nine*. Members were first sent to parliament from this place in 1304, or the thirty-third year of the reign of Edward the First: and Yarmouth took precedence of every other town on the island in attaining to that honour. Its regular representation did not begin to take place, however, until the 27th of Elizabeth, or the year 1584.

The *Corporation* consists of a mayor and twelve burgesses. The first charter was granted in 1135, the 36th of Henry the First, by Earl Baldwin, lord of the island. It was again incorporated by James I. in the year 1608. Agreeably to the last-mentioned charter, the mayor is chosen, upon every vacancy, by the burgesses in their Town-Hall, where they *fast* until nine out of the twelve have agreed who shall be the object of their choice. Another relic of old times attaching to Yarmouth, is one of those ancient courts called courts of *pie-poudre*.

The *Town-Hall*, just alluded to, forms the upper part of a convenient but unpretending brick building, the lower portion of which is designated the *Market-House*. The market is held on Wednesdays. An annual fair, of three days' duration, forms a further distinction of this antique town.

The *Castle*, placed at the entrance of the river, is one of the numerous small forts, frequently called block-houses, erected by Henry VIII. It occupies the site of a church, which had just before been destroyed by the French; and the dissolution of the religious houses afforded the funds, out of which both it, and many of its brethren, were erected. The eight guns of this little fortress protect equally the approach to the town, and the course of the Solent between the Island and Hurst Castle.

The only other edifice of importance is the *Church*, built in the year 1543, in consequence of the destruction of that more ancient church just spoken of. In 1831, this structure was completely repaired by the liberality of Daniel Alexander, Esq., a resident in the town, who also raised the tower to its present height, and erected a gallery in the interior at the west end. A small chapel near the chancel contains a well-executed statue, in marble, of Sir Robert Holmes, governor of the island, who died in 1692. A verbose and laboured Latin inscription records the merits and the deeds (else long since forgotten) of this "Robertus Holmes, Miles."

Other places of worship in Yarmouth are a *Methodists'* chapel, and one belonging to a congregation of *Baptists*. Neither of these buildings possess any architectural features deserving remark; though, internally, they are both neat and commodious.

Of *Inns* there are three: the principal of which, the George, is a large old house, erected by Admiral Sir Richard Holmes, when governor of the island. Charles II. was here entertained by the Admiral in 1671, on occasion of that monarch's visit to the Wight. This house occupies a very eligible situation near the quay. The Bugle, though in point of consequence only a second-rate establishment, will also provide the traveller with every suitable accommodation.

All circumstances considered, it may perhaps excite some

surprise that Yarmouth has never risen into importance as a watering-place. For, though the town contains in itself nothing particularly calculated to recommend it, that is not less true of several fashionable watering-places, whose vicinities are certainly inferior, both in rural beauty, and coast scenery, to the neighbourhood of this town. Still, the fact is, that Yarmouth is passed through, rather than sojourned at, by the great majority of its visitors: and while that continues to be the case, it is of course unlikely that the usual appendages of a watering-place will be there provided.

The distance of this town from Newport, the capital of the island, is eleven miles. The road lies through Thorley, Calbourne, and Carisbrooke. The two last-mentioned places have passed under notice: the first, THORLEY, is a village of no note, situate in a wooded vale. Its *Church*, said to have been built by Amicia, Countess of Devon, has a most barn-like appearance, being of small size, and without the usual distinction of ecclesiastical structures, a steeple. A somewhat more direct road to Newport, and that generally adopted, is the one through Shalfleet, which leaves Thorley on the right.

THE VOYAGE ROUND THE ISLAND.

THIS may be conveniently performed either from Cowes or Ryde; and by steam-packet, or sailing-boat, as the visitor may prefer. Of course, *steam* offers the more regular and expeditious mode of conveyance: yet there are some adventurous spirits who prefer the *sail*, though the wind, to be propitious throughout the excursion, must necessarily make more changes than are ordinarily to be expected even from that capricious element. During the summer months, a steam-boat leaves Ryde about once a week for the performance of this voyage; and generally returns in eight hours, or thereabouts. The trip is less statedly undertaken from Cowes; where, when it is about to take place, it is usual to announce the fact through the crier, and by placards. Cowes being the more centrical point, however, we will choose, in the following description, to suppose the voyage commenced from that watering-place. We will only farther premise, that in most cases we shall enumerate, rather than minutely particularize, the objects viewed from the vessel; some account of most of them having been already given.

Proceeding eastward, Old Castle Point is first rounded as we leave the mouth of the Medina; and then appears that famous "modern-antique," Norris Castle. Osborne House next meets the view: a finely wooded coast intervenes, and we pass King's Quay, the entrance to the Wootton river, and perceive Fern Hill and Wootton Church in the distance. Quarr Wood will call up some reminiscences of those remains of the ancient abbey which it embosoms. Binstead Parsonage,—

the picturesque bathing-house and seat of John Fleming, Esq., —Ryde House,—the villas of Earl Spencer and the Duke of Buckingham,—appear in succession; followed by Ryde itself, with its pier, terrace, chapels, cheerful white dwellings, &c. Woods now enrich the shore, with very little intermission, until we reach St. Helen's; permitting but a partial view of the seats called Appley, St. John's, St. Clare, Sea Grove, and the Priory. Sea-View, otherwise styled Nettlestone, and the *ci-devant* St. Helen's Church, now a sea-mark, are noted prior to our crossing the mouth of Brading Haven; beyond which lies the fertile valley that extends from the town of Brading to Appuldurcombe, while the downs of Shanklin and Wroxall close the perspective. Passing a perilous reef of rocks, named the Bembridge Ledge, and rounding the Foreland Point, Culver Cliffs appear in their lofty whiteness; and are succeeded by Sandown Bay, and the celebrated Chine of Shanklin. Luccombe Chine comes next; and then the bold eminence of Dunnose: East End follows; and we enter what is called the Race of Bonchurch.. All the beauties of the Undercliff are now in prospect; and it must be sufficient to recite the names of Ventnor, Steephill, St. Lawrence, Old Park, Mirables, the Orchard, Puckaster, the Sandrock Hotel, and Rocken End. The towering heights of St. Catherine's come next into view, with the gloomy features of Black-gang Chine. Chale and Brixton Bays are then traversed; affording glimpses, as we pass, of the villages of Brixton, Mottistone, and Brooke. Reaching Freshwater Bay, we are struck with the majestic altitude of the line of cliffs stretching before us: but we have so lately particularised all the features of this part of the coast, including the Needles Rocks, Scratchell's Bay, and Alum Bay, that further notice would involve an unnecessary recapitulation. Totland and Colwell Bays, and the point beyond which stands the lovely hamlet of Norton, are passed ere we re-view Yarmouth from the Solent, and notice its advantageous position

both as regards the Island and the opposite coast. Little to interest now occurs, till the entrance to Newtown River, and Thorness Bay, afford prospects of some fine interior scenery, backed by the range of downs that stretches from Freshwater to Gatcombe. Gurnard's Bay, Wood Vale, and Egypt House, are then the only objects that solicit attention, until we are once more called upon to admire the delightful situation of Cowes, and regain the point from which we started.

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